'Mūlamadhyamakaśāstra' or the fundamental text of the Mādhyamika school has earned a very wide reputation in India and abroad. For correct understanding of Nāgārjuna's contribution in the field of Buddhism this 'mangnum-opus' is to be considered with great attention. Because all the essential elements constituting the basic framework of Nāgārjuna's philosophy are actually provided in the Mūlamadhyamaka - Kārikā. Those among the remaining works which agree with Mūlamadhyamakārikā in regard to style, scope, doctrine explicitly are ascribed to Nāgārjuna by the testimony of trustworthy witnesses viz. Buddhapālita, Bhavya, Candrakīrti, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla.

The book opens with a bold proclamation of the doctrine of no-origination. Then the following subjects constituting the basic foundation of Buddhist philosophy are critically examined in the following way:-

1. Chapter - I: 'Pratyayapariṇākaśa' - 'The Examination of condition in 16 verses.

3. Chapter - III: 'Caksurādindriya - pañikṣā' - 'The Examination of The Faculty of Eye etc., in 9 verses.


5. Chapter - V: 'Dhātu- pañikṣā' - 'The Examination of Elements', in 8 verses.


13. Chapter - XIII: 'Ṣaṃskāra - parīkṣā' - The Examination of Mental Faculties, in 8 verses.


25. Chapter - XXV: 'Nirvāṇa - parīkṣā' - 'The Examination of Emancipation or Freedom', in 24 verses.


It is worthy of mention that the text contains 448 verses and was written in Sanskrit. Each Chapter is mainly concerned with one of those basic topics but by no means strictly confined to that very topic. For instance, the Chapter - XVIII mainly deals with the 'Ātma-parīkṣā' - 'The Examination of The Self', but various aspects of the belief in the existence of Ātman' are discussed in the following Chapters, viz. VIII, IX, X, XII, XVII, XXII.1 Thus minute study of the

1. Ch. - VIII (Karmaṅkaraka-paṭikṣā)
   Ch. - IX (Pūrvapariṣṭikṣā)
   Ch. - X (Agnīndhanapaṭikṣā)
   Ch. - XIII (Duṣṭhapaṭikṣā)
   Ch. - XVII (Karmaṇa-phalapaṭikṣā)
   Ch. - XXI (Sāṁsthava - vibhavapaṭikṣā).
Kārikas reveals that fact that its Chief purpose was not so much to give an exposition of their philosophy as to prepare the ground for such an exposition viz. by clearing away misconceptions, especially the elements of analysis, which the Sarvāstivādins were subject to. The Mādhyamika doctrine as propounded by Nāgārjuna in his Mūlamadhyamaka - kārikā has been influenced by the views enshrined in the Prajñāpāramitā - Śāstra. He has elaborated through his reasoning the doctrines which were indicated in the Pali texts and in the Pāramitā - Śāstras. Nāgārjuna explains that Prajñāyasamutpāda is none other than Śūnyata as well as Madhyamā pratipada. However, the specific Abhidharmika or canonical Buddhist concepts (dharma) are discussed in the Chapters - I, III, IV, V, VII, XVII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII. Likewise, common-sense notions underlying all realistic (positivistic) views concerning dharmas and atman are

4. 'The Brahmajāla Sutta' (in the light of Nāgārjuna's exposition) - Indian Historical Quarterly, 8, 1932, pp. 706-746.
5. Yah prajñāyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatām tam pracaksāmahe /
   Sa prajñāpir upādāya pratipat saiva madhyamā/
   Mūlamadhyamakāśāstra, Ch. XXIV, verse - 18.
6. Ch.-I (Pratyaya Purīksā), Ch.-III (Cakṣurāindriya-Purīksā), Ch.-IV (Skandha-Purīksā), Ch.-V(Dhātu-Purīksā), Ch.-VII (Samskāra-Purīksā), Ch.-XVIII (Karma-phala-Purīksā), Ch.-XXIII (Viparyśa-Purīksā), Ch.-XXIV (Āryasatya-Purīksā), Ch.- XXV (Nirvāṇa-Purīksā), Ch.-XXVI (Dvādasāṅga-Purīksā), Ch.-XXVIII (Drsti-Purīksā).
scattered in the following chapters - II, VI, XI, XIII, XIV, XV, XIX, XX, XXI. About the question of the topics and sequences of the chapter, it may be said, that is not straight forward. A theme is dealt with and then left abruptly. Sometimes in the middle of discussion the old one comes back. Justly Christian Lindtner laments that "Indian commentators have not paid any attention, taking the Chapters as they come, and leaving it upto an imaginary opponent to decide the next issue on the agenda." One cannot see a progression in the work nor envisage a change in the argument or the chapter sequence without too much disturbance.

The Central position of this work is known by the great influence it has in later times. In India alone atleast ten commentaries and two sub-commentaries are known to have been written, but several of these are no longer extant. The lone extant Sanskrit commentary is Candrakīrti's 'Prasannapadā', written with a knowledge of the Akutabhaya (incorrectly ascribed to Nāgārjuna), Buddhapālita's commentary and Bhavya's Prajñāpradīpa. All these are indispensable for an assessment of the role of the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā. Candrakīrti, a notable representitive of Prāṣangika school of Āryadeva and

7. Ch.-II (Gatāgata-Pañśkā), Ch.-VI (Rāgarakta-Pañśkā), Ch.-XI(Pūrvaparakoṭi-Pañśkā), Ch.-XII (Samskāra-Pañśkā), Ch.-XIV(Samsarga-Pañśkā), Ch.-XV (Svabhava-Pañśkā), Ch.-XIX (Kāla-Pañśkā), Ch.-XX (Samagri-Pañśkā), Ch.-XXI (Sambhava-Vibhava-Pañśkā).
9. Ibid. p. 98.
10. Ibid.
Buddhapālita, recognised ‘no views’ and utilized the ‘reductio ad absurdum’ method to refute the views of their opponents. Those of Svātantrikas, represented by Bhavya or Bhāvaviveka, admitted a positive thesis on the basis of which they criticised the opponents’ views. In the introductory verses, Buddha’s discourses are all referred to in the accusative case as ‘anirodham’, ‘anutpadaś’, ‘anucchedaś’, ‘āśāśvataś’, ‘anekārthaś’, ‘anānarthathā’, ‘anāgamaś’, ‘anirgamaś’, ‘pratītyasamutpādaś’, ‘prapañcaspasamaś’, ‘śivaś’ without giving any indication as to whether they refer to one doctrine or several. Therefore, it is possible to interpret these verses as referring to several different concepts in the Buddha’s philosophy. Thus Candrakīrti, from the Prāsaṅgika standpoint, comments, on these verses which show very definitely how he moves from a svātantrika interpretation to a prāsaṅgika one. He begins his treatise, the Prasannapadā, by emphasizing the significance of the Pratītyasamutpāda.

Accepting both the general or distributive meaning and the particular usage of the term, he explains Pratītya-samutpāda as “the arising of things contingent upon causes and conditions” - hetupratyayāpekṣo bhāvanānuttātyād pratītyasamutpādārthāḥ.12 Contrasting it with the definition offered by those who

11. Anirodham anutpadaś anucchedaś aśāśvataś,
    anekārthaś anānarthathā anāgamaś anirgamaś/
Yah pratītyasamutpādaś prapañcaspasamaś śivaś,
   desayamasa saṁbuddhaḥ tam vande vandatāṁ varam

accepted a theory of momentariness (ksanika-vāda). According to this kṣanika-
vāda Praṇīṭyaśamutpāda means - prati prati ityānāṁ vināśināṁ samutpāda-itī, i.e. the arising of those that are repeatedly destroyed. CandraRTrti raises a question - 'kathameva anenaiva prāptēḥ saṃbhava ita yuktyanupādānena'. i.e. "how can one maintain that there is origination of that which has reached another without obtaining a relation?" He continues to emphasize Nāgārjuna's view that "Whatever that has arisen reaching such and such, that is not arisen in terms of self-nature" - tat tat prāpya saṃutpannam not-pannaṁ tat svabhāvataḥ. This explanation of CandraRTrti, certainly, indicates that the negation of dedicatory or introductory verses are intended to deny that things are arisen through self-nature (Svabhāvataḥ) and there seems to be no implication that they are applicable to dependent arising itself. On the contrary, when he proceeds to explain the principle of Praṇīṭyaśamutpāda, he applies the negations to Praṇīṭyaśamutpāda itself, as if the negations are presented as adjectives qualifying it, instead of accepting Praṇīṭyaśamutpāda as the positive middle position of Buddha. This leads CandraRTrti to a position of "no-views" which is then identified with the "Praṇīṭcōpasāma" (i.e. the "appeasement of

13. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Yathāvasthitapraṇīṭyasamutpādadarsanesate aryānāṁ abhidheyyādilakṣāṇasya praṇīṭcāsya sarvathoparamāt, praṇīṭcānāmupaśamoasminniti sa eva praṇīṭya-
samutpādaḥ praṇīṭcāpasāma ityucyate/ Cittacaittanāṁ, ca tasminnaprayyttau jñānajñeyavyāvahāranīttau jātijāra-marapādi niravasesopadravahitavatsiveḥ/ yathāvihitavisētanasya praṇīṭyasamutpādasya desarākriyā īpsitamatvatvāt karmanā nirdeśāh/ -MS, p.4.
obsessions") or "Nirvāṇa" (i.e. liberation). With this interpretation of the negations, the Praśīyasamutpāda and Nirvāṇa, Candrakīrti, now, moves on to the contents of MMK's first chapter on the Pratityaśāntika and involves himself in a discussion of the Prāsaṅgika and Svātāntrika standpoints. It is to be noted that modern interpreters of Nāgārjuna, probably following Candrakīrti, have assumed that all these terms refer to no other doctrine, that is - Praśīyasamutpāda.

According to Svātāntrika standpoint, on the contrary, the eight negations may be taken as a refutation of the false views (Mithyā-dṛṣṭi), primarily the theories of substantial existence (astitva) and nihilistic non-existence (nāstitva), that is, the non - ceasing (aniruddha) of a substantial entity and the non - arising (anutpāda) of a non-existent entity. In fact, the non - ceased (aniruddhaṃ) and non - arisen (anutpānaṃ) are equivalent to the non - empty (asūnya), a term used to refer to substance (svabhāva). Hence, these negations could be considered as another way of presenting the non-substantiality (anatman) not only of phenomena but also of those views. Secondly, Praśīyasamutpāda would stand for the middle position, which is the right view (Saṃyak dṛṣṭi) on the basis of which the wrong views (Mithyā-dṛṣṭi) are criticised. Praśīyasamutpāda is considered to be the right view, not because it is an absolute

17. Kulupahana, D. J. Ibid. p. 103
18. Ibid.
truth, but because it allows for possible explanations of phenomena not permitted by theories of absolute existence and nihilistic non-existence.\textsuperscript{19} Finally, Prapancopāsaṁam and śiva (the auspicious) would be the result of adopting the middle position. This is freedom or Nirvāṇa.\textsuperscript{20}

Thus these verses refer to a positive core of Buddha’s teaching along with negative aspect which was intended as a rejection of the heretical views.

In the second verse\textsuperscript{21}, Nāgārjuna presents his negative thesis, which in dedicatory verse he expressed with the eight negations. It is the thesis that he undertakes to prove in the first twenty-five chapters. He has not provided any arguments yet, except saying that these four kinds of events are not evident. The four kinds of events referred to here are comparable to those mentioned in the Saṁyuttanikāya.\textsuperscript{22} However, commentary of Candrakīrti on this particular verse is more than one tenth of his entire work.\textsuperscript{23} Kalupahana says “it is a stupendus commentary filled with lot of metaphysical trivia and diatribes, most directed at Bhāvaviveka and Svētantrika tradition.”\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Vaidy, P. L. Ibid. P. 4. (also quoted foot note. 16).
\item \textsuperscript{21} Na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyaṁ nāpyahetutah / utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kvacana kecana //
\hspace{1cm} MMK, Ch.-I,Verse -2
\item \textsuperscript{23} Kalupahana, D. J. Ibid. p. 105
\item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
The theory of condition is primarily a Buddhist theory. Among the Buddhist schools the first to advocate a theory of substance (svabhāva, dravya etc.) at its early stage was the Sarvāstivāda school. There can be little disagreement that Nāgārjuna's statements represent an outright rejection of the Sarvāstivāda interpretation of conditions.25

Nāgārjuna seems to have accepted the Ābhidharmika theory of four conditions, without characterising it either as self-causation or as external-causation. Then he proceeds to analyse the views of the Ābhidharmika. According to him the self-nature of existence is not evident in the conditions, etc. In the absence of self-nature, other-nature too is not evident. It seems to indicate, he found that these are the ones who produced theories of self-causation (śvata-utpatti) and external-causation (parata-utpatti) out of the Ābhidharmika theory of conditions (pratyaya).26 Then, he shows that in none of these four Pratyas, neither singly, nor jointly can we find the so-called 'effect'. Then the effect has been examined to show that if effect does not exist in the causes how can it be produced out of them? The question of pre-existence of effect in cause and non-pre-existence has been judged to show that production in all cases is in an impossibility. Both cause and effect are relative and therefore causality is only an appearance, not reality.

CHAPTER - II

As the title of the chapter suggests, this chapter is an examination of what is known to have transpired or gone (gata) and what is known not to have transpired or gone (āgata). In developing the argument, however, the use of another term is necessitated in relating 'gata' with 'āgata', this term is 'gamyamāna' - the passing away in or from the present. The argument in the present chapter is addressed to those who maintain the idea of an individuality in things (the pudgala-vādins) such as the case was with the Sammitiyas and the Vātsiputryas.27 But it is the Sarvāstivāda school that figures most prominently for Nāgārjuna. The Central concept for them was, things are eternal in their essential nature (Svabhāva), but in their passage through the three periods of time they appear as impermanent form of existence (bhāva)28. Proceeding on the argument Nāgārjuna's first thesis is that motion cannot be localised in any one of the three aspects of time. The opponent replies that movement really occurs in a passing (gati) in course of a place's being passed (gata). But, says Nāgārjuna that one can not travel a path, which has already been passed (gatam

28. Sarvāstivāda maintains the existence of the elements of the past and the future in the present (Trikālasat). In other words it upholds that the present has its root in past and the consequence in the future. A.C. Banerjee observed that it is connected with the implications of Trikālavāda on which there was a fierce controversy in ancient India not only in the Buddhist schools of thought - but also among Naiyāyikas, Vaiyākaras, Sāṅkhya-Yogins and others'. - Ibid. p-91.
na gamyate) nor can one pass through path which is not yet travelled (āgatam naiva gamyate), it is not also possible to travel a path which has neither been travelled nor yet to be travelled; it has been proved that a mover does not move (gantā na gacchati), again the non-mover does not move (āganta naiva gacchati) and who is the third then who is neither a mover, nor a non-mover which can move.

Supposing there was movement after all, where and when should its motion begin? Motion is purely illogical. In the same way opposite concept, cessation, is shown to be illogical. Who should stop and when? The movement and its subject can not be conceived either as identical or different and therefore, being indeterminate, can not be established.

Buddha was reluctant to discuss the absolute origin of the Universe. The Abhidharna interpreters were aware of it. Therefore, their way of handling the Abhidharna analysis, specially their understanding of change as momentary

29. Gatam na gamyate tavadagatam naiva gamyate,
    gatāgata vinirmuktam gamyamānām na gamyate/
    MMK, Ch.-II, ka-I
    MKV, p. 33.

30. Gamyamānasya gamanam kathāṃ nāmopapatsyato,
    gamyamānānì gamānāṃ yadā nāvopapadyate.
    MMK, Ch.-II, Ka-3, MKV, p. 34.

31. MMK, Ch.-II, Kārikānos 8-21.

destruction (kṣaṇa-bhaṅga), left them sometimes with four direct moments i.e. Origin, statis, decay and destruction (recognised by Sarvāstivāda), sometimes three i.e. origin, statis and destruction (by Theravāda) and sometimes with two i.e. origin and destruction (by Sautrāntikas). In all these instances, each preceding moment had to account for the succeeding moment that is different.33

The next three chapters viz; the Caksurāḍindrādi parīkṣā, the Skandha. Parīkṣā and the Dhatu - Parīkṣā are closely connected, and examine the components that in one way or another can be said to make up an individual. They deal with the five skandhas (Ch.-IV), the twelve or eighteen bases (Ch.-III) and the six elements (Ch.-V)34. The eighteen elements were indirectly disposed of in chapter-III. Chapter - IV investigates the relation between desire and the desiring subject, but this is obviously an arbitrary choice, dictated by 'rhetorical' motive35. However, these three are closely connected, as all three examine the components that in one way or another can be said to make up an individual. The individual as a conscious being presupposes twelve senses, consisting of the six sense organs and the corresponding six sense objects.36 Each of these six sets forms the ground for a corresponding awareness. It is to

34. Christian Lindtener observes that these three chapters were later supplemented by Śūnyatā-Saptati. Potter, K. Ibid. pp. 45-57.
35. Ibid. p. 107.
36. In his Analytical study of The Abhidharmakosā, Dr. Sukomal Chaudhury gave a detailed description about dhātu, āyatana and skandha with their special implications according to the view of different Abhidharmikā schools. pp. 71ff.
be worthy of mention, that those chapters examine the view of Abhidharmika schools mainly Sarvāstivāda as well as Vaihāśika and Sautrāntika.

CHAPTER - III

This chapter deals with the field of or sphere of action of the six sense organs. The line of thought in the discussion necessarily entails the understanding of the logic involved in the previous chapter. There we have seen that the three concepts gata, āgata and gamyamāna cannot be maintained. In the present chapter Nāgārjunācārya deals with only the first of the six sense organ, i.e. the seeing activity. After enumerating the six sense organs and their actions, he takes up the cause of eye, beginning with the argument that the eye organ (darsana) is unable to see its own self, hence is not fit to see others.

The illustration of fire which burns other objects while remaining unburnt is also rejected following the process adopted in the case of rejection of 'gata' and 'āgata'. According to the Sautrāntikas, seeing is not an act. It is only a state of

37. Darṣanam śravanaṃ ghrānam rasanaṃ sparsanaṃ manaḥ/
   indriyāni sadetesāṁ draṣṭavyādini gocareḥ/
   MMK, Ch.-III, Ka.-1

38. darsanam hi tattvameva na paśyati /
   na paśyati yadāśīmanam katham dṛksyati tatparat //

39. Yathā gataṃ na gamyate nāgataṃ na gamyamānaṃ, evamagnināpi dagdham na
dṛṣṭyatā nādagdham dṛṣṭhata ityādina samantāvacyam/ yathā ca na gataṃ
dūgataṃ na gamyamānaṃ gamyate, evam -
a dṛṣṭam dṛṣṭaye tāvadṛṣṭam: naiva dṛṣṭaye/
   dṛṣṭeṣuviniruktam dṛṣyamānaṃ na dṛṣṭaye/
   ityādī vācyam, //
   MS, pp. 48-49.
affairs. Therefore, since there is no act of seeing, 'Seeing does not see' is an unjustifiable statement.\textsuperscript{40} Candrakīrti replies that there can never be a state of affairs without action. Every state of affairs has to be active. It may also be pointed out that if there is no act possible, no state of affairs would also be possible.\textsuperscript{41} Gradually it has been shown that there is no seer (drṣṭa), the act of seeing, or the object to be seen. Thus, after pointing out the inappropriateness of certain metaphysical views pertaining to visual perception in terms of dependent origination, Nāgarjuna concludes that other five sense-organ or faculties and their objects should be understood in the same way as "seeing".

Nāgarjuna, probably, was not so much interested in the faculties per se, for there was not much controversy regarding the eye etc. Actually no school doubted the existence of these faculties. The controversies were centered more on the function of the faculties, that is, with regard to seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking. For this reason; Nāgarjuna immediately moves on to an analysis of the more complicated issues relating to their functions.

\textsuperscript{40} darśanasvabhābasya tāvad drṣṭikriyāyuktasya bhūyāḥ pāśyatiyādīnā sambandho nopapadyate drṣṭikriyādvayapraśangāt darśanadvayapraśangācca adarsanamapi na pāśyati darśanakriyārahita - tvādāngulīyagavadityabhipāyah - MS, pp.-49.

\textsuperscript{41} yadi kriyā vyāvahāraṅgabhūta na syāt, tādā dharma - mātramapi na syāt, kriyāviraḥitavātkaḥupavadviti kutaḥ kriyāraḥitam dhammaṁ bhaviṣyat? tasmādāḥ vyāvahārasaṁyāṁ dhammaṁ bhaviṣyatvā, kriyāpyābyupagamaryatāṁ/ MS, p. 50

Candrakīrti also cites from Caṭuhṣatakā,

\begin{verbatim}
kriyāvān sāvato nāsti nāsti sarvagatā kriyā/
niskriyā nāstīna tulyo nairatmyam kim na te priyāṁ?
\end{verbatim}

Ibid.
Hence the reference to seeing, hearing, etc., especially as means of identification of events that is so important for an empiricist like Nagarjuna. Even among these various faculties and their functions, the most important epistemological issues were connected with seeing. Hence Nagarjuna’s interest in the problem of visual perception. Indeed, it was the problem of perception that was most effected by a theory of moments, as is evident from the variety of contradictory theories of perception presented by the Abhidharmik schools. The theory of moments (ksāṇa) that led to metaphysics in the sphere of causation (chapter-II) and change (chapter-II) did not leave the problem of perception untouched.

CHAPTER - IV

This chapter ‘Skandha - Pañkaś’ or the ‘Examination of Aggregates’ deals with only the material form or Rupa and not one of the psychological aggregates such as feeling, perception, disposition or consciousness, directly. According to Kalupahana, he has already examined the process of perception and, therefore, needs to analyse the object of perception, rather than perception itself. As it was done in chapter-III, Nagarjuna treats only the first of the five skandhas and assumes the same line of argument can be congetly carried out with respect to the other four. His first argument is that it is inconceivable to say that rupa can be separated from the Four Great Elements viz. Earth, Water, Fire and Wind, for these are after all concomitant causes for the rupa’s own

42. Ibid. p. 140
being.\textsuperscript{43} Nāgārjuna argues that even if there is rūpa its cause cannot be established and the argument is equally applicable in case of non-existence of rupa.\textsuperscript{44} And a causeless form (rūpa) cannot be established.

This cause of form (rūpākārānāṁ) even if proved, is not in a position to produce identical and non-identical effects. Thus Rupā cannot be proved to exist. By the application of same argument it has been shown that other feeling, perception etc. may be examined.\textsuperscript{45} Here Nāgārjuna tries to exhibit the fact that any concept or thing cannot be described by reference to a simple cause effect relationship in order to establish its existential status. The concluding two karikas are very important in that they seem to admit that the Mādhyamika have a positive thesis, namely, “dependent arising” which is accepted on the basis of experience. On the basis of his Vigrahāvārtanī, modern interpreters have assumed that he was merely an analytical philosopher whose enterprise was confined solely to “analyais” (vigraha) of opposing views utilizing the conception

\textsuperscript{43} Rūpa-kāraṇā-nirmuktam na rūpam upalabhya/ rūpenēpi na nirmuktam dṛṣṭyate rūpa - kāraṇam //
Rūpa kāraṇa nirmukte rūpe rūpam parisajyate /
ahetukam na cāṣṭyartha kaścid ahetukāḥ kvacīt//

MMK, Ch.-IV, Ka nos. -1&2

\textsuperscript{44} Rūpe satyena rūpasya kāraṇam nopapadyate /
rue' saty eva rūpasya kāraṇaṁ nopapadyate //

Ibid. ka.-4.

\textsuperscript{45} Vedana-citta-saṁjñānāṁ saṁskāraṇam ca sarvaṁah/
sarvesāṁ eva bhāvāṁ rūpeśaṁva saṁaṁ kramaṁ//

Ibid. ka.-7
of "emptiness" (Śūnyatā). Here Nāgārjuna also presents two identical Kārikās except for the use of the two pairs of terms, 'Vigraha' and 'Parihāra' in the former and 'Vyākhyana' and 'upalambha' in the later. The term 'Vyākhyana' meaning 'explanation' seems to indicate that, in addition to "analysis in terms of emptiness", Nāgārjuna was also providing an "explanation". The "Explanation" is once again said to be based on emptiness (Śūnyatā Vyākhyāne krte). But the term emptiness did not occur for "explanation in terms of dependent arising" throughout the chapter. Thus the "emptiness" being the counter part of "dependent arising" would, therefore, be the same as "explanation in terms of emptiness". Kalupahana opines 'Nāgārjuna, even when presenting his positive theory of "dependent arising", need not worry about someone censuring him, for the theory of "dependence", like "emptiness", was intended to reject the metaphysics of substance, and responsibility once again falls on his opponent to prove his own substance - metaphysics'.

46. Kalupahana, D. J. Ibid. p. 146.

CHAPTER - V

In this chapter named 'Dhātu-Parīkṣa' or The Examination of Elements", Nāgārjuna considers the nature of true knowledge of the six realms or "elements" (dhātu) i.e, bhū (earth), ap (water), tejas (fire), anila (wind), ākaśa (space) and Vijñāna (Space). As in previous chapters he treats only one of the elements, this time the ākaśa, and demonstrates how it cannot exist in four respects. That

46. Kalupahana, D. J. Ibid. p. 146.
is to say ākāsa cannot exist as - 1) an entity or existence (bhāva), 2) a non-entity or non-existence (abhāva); 3) a characterization (lakṣya) and 4) a characteristic (lakṣana)\(^{47}\). These four aspects are applicable to the other Fine Dhātus, also.\(^{48}\)

In the concluding verse of this chapter, Nāgārjuna comes out with a truth of things in the Mādhyamika sense that one who indulges in the conceptualization of nature's elements, e.g. into existence and non-existence, will never arrive at their real understanding. In the last kārikā, the term 'dravyopaśāma' or the "appeasement of the object" is equivalent to "appeasement of dispositions" or "saṃskāropaśāma" or the "appeasement of obsessions" or "prapāñcopośāma". Instead of eliminating both existence and non-existence and looking for a transcendent reality, a reality that is beyond both existence and non-existence or beyond conception, it is possible to appease (upaśama) one's dispositions (Saṃskāra) or obsession (prapañca). Because these dispositions or obsessions, when followed to their positive extreme, lead to the belief in a permanent existence (astitva); when completely negated they contribute toward the belief in non-existence (nāstiva). hence, it is wise for a philosopher to lay emphasis

\(^{47}\) Nālaksane lakṣanāya pravṛttir na salakṣane,
  salakṣanālaksanābhyām nāpyanyatra pravartate /
  MMK, Ch.-V, Ka-3.

\(^{48}\) Tasmān na bhāvo nābhāvo na lakṣyam nāpi lakṣanaṁ/
  ākāsaṁ ākāsa-saṁā dhatvah paṃca ye pare. /
on their appeasement rather than their promotion or elimination.49

CHAPTER - VI

The chapter - VI viz. ‘Rāgarakta - Pārika’ investigates the relation between lust and lustful subject. In the first Kārikā, Nāgārjuna says - "If a lustful one, separated from lust, were to exist prior to lust, then depending upon him there will be lust. Lust exists when there is a lustful one."50 Here is a misunderstanding regarding its interpretation because Candrakīrti assumes that every initial verse

49. In his Prasannapada, Candrakīrti explains draṣṭavyopāsānam Śiva lakṣaṇaṁ sarvakalpanājālārahitam jñāṇajñye yanivṛttiśvabhāvaṁ śiva-paramārthasvabhāvaṁ / Paramārthamjānamamaramaprapanca nirvāṇaṁ śūnyatāsvabhāvaṁ te na paśyanti mandabuddhitāṁ astitvāṁ nāstitvāṁ abhinibāśīṁ sant' iti// He also quotes from Ratnāvalī, in support of his explanation, Nāṭikī durgatīṁ yāti sugatīṁ yātiyānestikāṁ / yathābhūtāparīṇāṇāmokṣamadvayanīśriyātha// also from Samādhirāja sūtra. Āstīti nāstīti ubheapi antā / suddhi aśuddhīti imeapi antā / Tasmādubhe anta vivarjaitvā / maddhyeapi sthānaṁ na karoti panditaḥ // Āstīti nāstīti vivādaṁ esah / suddhi aśuddhīti ayam yivādaṁ / Vivāda prāptya na duḥkhaṁ prasāmyate / avivādapraṇāya ca-duḥkham nirudhyate // Samādhirājasūtra, 9. 26-28/ MS, pp. 60-61.

50. Rāgād yadi bavet pūrvaṁ raktō rāga - tiraskṛtaḥ / tam patīya bhaved rāgo raktaṁ rāgo bhavet sati // MMK, Ch.-VI, ka-1.
in every chapter represents a statement of the opponent's view which is to be repudiated. Kalupahana observed that this may be true in some chapters, but there is no need to universalize it. "There is no reason why Nāgārjuna could not take up his or the Buddha's views first and then go on to repudiate what are considered to be inappropriate ideas."51

In the Buddhist view, lust or attachment (Rūga) is an important constituent of perception, primarily because in Buddhism the analysis of perception was not undertaken for its own sake, but for the sake of discovering the cause of bondage and freedom. In the Buddha's own analysis of perception, obsessions (prapañca) appears in a personality that is already smeared with lust. The Buddha consistently avoided any speculation regarding absolute origins. As such he was not willing to assume either a pure personality, 'a tabula rasa' which comes to be defiled by adventitious elements52 or the existence of an element called lust (Rūga) in the external world independent of a conscious person who generates lust on the basis of external objects. For him, objects can be classified as pleasurable (Subha) unpleasurable (Asubha), or neutral only in relation to a perceiving individual who is prone to make such distinctions. A person who is prone to such distinctions is one who is either dominated by lust (rūga) or aversion (doṣa) or indifference53. Based on this very ground

51. Ibid. p. 153
Kalupahana accepts the present verse “is a clear statement of Nāgārjuna’s own position, not the statement of an opponent that is to be rejected.”\textsuperscript{54}

Thus, Nāgārjuna raises the question as to how there could be lust in the absence of lustful one. This avoids the theory of tabula rasa and the adventitious impressions. Let alone the existence or the non-existence of lust, even the lustful one has to be analysed in terms of dependence, nor in terms of pure entities having their own self-nature (Svabhava)\textsuperscript{55}. If the opponents were to hold that though lust and the lustful person cannot be established independent of each other, still they may co-exist, then the answer of Nāgārjuna is that their co-existence could be established only when they are established separately.

\textbf{CHAPTER - VII}

The chapter - VII – Sāmśkrta-Paṁśā disprove the three characteristics, origination (Utpāda), duration (Sthiti) and cessation (bhaṅga), inseparable from anything causally created, that is composite (sāmśkrta), and to that extent elaborates the discussion on causation. The argument for the impossibility of maintaining the conditioned nature is carried through by means of the above three characteristics and with the same type of logic we have seen employed in the “Gatāgata-Paṁśā” (Ch-II) i.e., with respect to the analysis of Gamyamāna,

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid. p. 154.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid. pp. 156ff where the Sarvāstivāda conception of identity and the Sautrāntika analysis of reality into discrete momentary entities are presented.
gata and agata. Here, again, each moment of the conditioned things, for example, the characteristic of origination, is taken up and the question is raised whether something prior or previous to it can be its cause.

The advancement of a cause invariably breaks down because what has arisen does not require a cause nor does what has not arisen. This analysis is carried through with the other two characteristics of duration and cessation. The breaking up of entities into different moments is an impossibility and thus Nāgārjuna states finally that the establishment of origination, duration and cessation is not possible at all and that there is no such thing as a conditioned realm. His central position is clearly expressed in the Kārikā-16: Whatever that comes to be dependently, that is inherently peaceful. Therefore, that which is presently arising as well as originating itself is peaceful. This unique statement in the present chapter comes after Nāgārjuna's important refusal about a form of "dependent origination" that also carries the implication of self-causation (svata-utpatti). Nāgājuna rejects this causal explanation as meaningless, for there is actually no production of anything new in such a context. It is mere self

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57. Pratītyā yaṁ yaṁ bhavati that tadchāntam svabhāvatāḥ /
   tasmād utpadhyamānaṁ ca sāntam utpattireva ca//
   MMK, Ch.-VII, Ka-16.
58. Utpadyānānaṁ utpattāv idam na kramate yaṁ/  
   kathāṁ utpadānānaṁ tu pratityotpattīṇucyate//
   Ibid. ka-15.
If a thing prior to its origination were to exist, not having been originated, then alone it would be considered originating, depending upon the act of origination. But prior to origination non-originated thing is not possible.

What would then originate? Candrakirti raises an interesting point in the form of the following view of the supposed opponent. Though a thing called 'jar' does not exist prior to its origination, even then one can say that the thing to be originated would be called 'jar'. Candrakirti's reaction is that the thing coming into existence would be called 'jar' only when the act of origination starts. But that which is still in the future cannot be an object of the process of origination.

How could then such a thing be the object of the act of origination and thus be

59. Kalupahana refers that it is indicative of the manner in which the Sautrāntikas, while trying to explain causation in term of "association" of discrete momentary entities, were eventually led to a substantialist conception of causation. Either they had to accept self-causation or remain satisfied with mere self-reproduction, the latter providing no explanation of creativity at all. "Dependent arising", on the contrary, accounts for creativity without falling into the substantialist trap. Ibid. p.168.

60. Yadi kaścid anutpanno bhāvah samvidyate kvacit, utpadyeta sa kim tasmim bhāva utpadyate sati // MMK, Ch.-VII, ka-17.

61. yadyutpādaśāṃ purvam ghāto nasti, tathāpi utpannah san ghaṭasāṃ jīna pratilabhya, tadbhāvinyā samjnayā na dosa iti. ... /
MS, p. 74.

called present? If it is said that the act of origination proceeds in respect of something 'non-jar', then we have to clarify what is meant by 'non-jar'. Would this non-jar be a cloth or would it be nothing? If it were cloth in the state of non-origination, how could it be called 'jar' when originated? If it is nothing, then how could the act of origination proceed in respect of such a thing which is nothing and how could that nothing become jar? Therefore, the name to be given to a future thing cannot establish origination.

According to Lindtner that Chapter - VII - 34 is a sort of preliminary conclusion to Chs.I-VII: Objective multiplicity considered as a series of independent factors subjected to change according to a given causal pattern is illusory. Observation of kalupahana may be considered regarding a certain point that while Nāgārjuna has specifically criticised the three kinds of events (origination, duration, and cessation), he has made no criticism whatsoever of decay (jarā). In fact, at Ch. VII. 24, decay and death (jarā-maraṇa) were used as arguments for the rejection of stasis (sthīti). In short, the Buddha's own conceptions of arising (uppāda), ceasing (vaya, nirodha), change of what has remained (ṭhitassa anīnāthatta), decay (jarā), impermanence (aniccattā) have been left intact. These have no room for a substantial entity (an atman, a svabhava) and are indeed compatible with the Buddha's famous doctrine of non-substantiality (anattā). There could be no reason why a philosopher of

Nāgārjuna's calibre could not distinguish the empirical nature of the Buddha's analysis of the "Characteristics of the dispositionally conditioned" (saṅkhata saṅkhatalakkhaṇāni) from the metaphysical character of the ideas expressed by the interpreters of the Abhidhamma.  

**CHAPTER - VIII**

In the early discourses, karma and samskara are mutually related. The Buddha who denied an eternal self or soul (Ātman) was often confronted by skeptics as to how karmas performed by a "no-self" can effect a person. What is generally understood as a substantial being (satta) or person (pudgala) is nothing more than a "lump of dispositions", which is another name for the five aggregates (khandha), each receiving its form conditioned by samskāras. Neither the "lump of dispositions" nor the aggregates were considered to be substantial, that is, having a reality of their own. The "dispositions" (samskāra), which are acquired by the person and, therefore, impermanent, are also responsible for conditioning personality. Thus, according to early Buddhism, neither the person nor the aggregates, one of which is samskāra or disposition, have any substantial reality. In the first place, the dispositions themselves are impermanent and secondly, all phenomena, including all persons or aggregates,

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64. Kalupahana, D. J. Ibid. p. 178.
are non-substantial. Yet, when the canonical Abhidharma texts rejected a real self or soul (Atta) and listed the various physical and psychological factors that go to constitute the human personality, the interpreters of these physical and psychological factors transgressed the limits of speculation and admitted the real existence of these various factors. So is deduced the theory of the substantiality of elements propounded by Sarvāstivāda school. Naturally, Nāgārjuna in his attempt to establish the non-substantiality of all elements (Dharmanairatma), was compelled to examine the concepts of action as well as the agent of such action in the present section of his treatise. Lindtner, further, points out that chapters VIII-X have a strong thematic connection, attacking the thesis peculiar to the Vatsīputriya of the existence of personal substance (a "soul"), which is its own creative principle, and for which the physical and psychological components of the personality are merely instrument in saṃsāra.

However in this chapter Nāgārjuna brings to sharp focus the Buddhist conceptions of the agent (Kāraka) and his action (Karman) in order to correctly understand the function of dharmas in the realm of conditioned elements (saṃskṛtaḥ dharmāḥ). In discussing the two concepts, Nāgārjuna introduces the metaphysical notion of a thing in its completed state (Sadbhūta) as well as

68. Ibid. pp. 181-182.
69. Potter, K. H. Ibid. p. 101
its incompleted state (asadbhūta) and attempts to illustrate the various possible conditions expressible and assignable with respect to the agent and his action.  

But, all these conditions, which are taken up in turn, are untenable. The ultimate standpoint is that of the dynamics of relational structure (Prafiyā) and is an important link with the Mādhyamika creed. He establishes it by the following way: (1) an existent agent can not create an existing object likewise, (2) existing and non-existing agent cannot create an existing and non-existing object, (3) the agent and the object have dependence of agents and objects, and the

70. Candrakīrti, in reference to the initial verse, discusses an interesting contrast between the completed (Sabhūta) and incompleted (asadbhūta) states of the agent and his action. It illustrate the two alternatives in which these terms are related as follows:  

\[
\text{Sadbhūta (kriyāyukta) Kāraka} / \text{asadbhūta (kriyārahitā) Kāraka Karman} \\
\]

i.e. the completed state is accompanied by function (kriya) while asadbhūta or incompleted state is not. Yet, in discussing either the agent or the action, the function represents a third concept. Nāgārjuna’s thesis is that the status of any entity in a completed or incompleted state cannot issue forth another entity. - Inada, kenneth, K. (Ibid. pp. 71-72). makes this discussion based on the Japanese translation of the Prasannapada (Vol.-II, op. cit. pp. 127-28; Notes 14 & 16) by S. Yamaguchi, who has also presented that above mentioned diagrams also Prasannapadā in the Madhyamaka - Śāstram, pp. 84-86.

71. Prafiyā kārakah karma tāṁ prafiyā ca kārakah / karmaprvartate nānyatpaśyāmaḥ siddhi kāraṇam //

MMK, Ch.-VIII, ka-12

72. Sadbhūtasya kriyā nāstikarma ca syādakrtkam/  
Ibid. ka-2

73. Kārakah sadasadbhūtaḥ sadasadakrute na tat / parasparaviruddham hi saccāsaccaikataḥ kutaḥ //  
Ibid. ka-7

74. Ibid. kā.-12, (already quoted in note - 71).
accepted material thing also are rejected on the ground that mutual dependence
is not natural because both lack identity.\(^{75}\) Thus the final verse speaks of the
various other phenomena which can be examined similarly as that of the agent
and his action, thus projecting into and anticipating the next two chapters which
discuss, respectively, the antecedent state of an entity\(^{76}\) and the relationship
between fire and wood.\(^{77}\)

**CHAPTER - IX**

The Mādhyamika standpoint here is to destroy the wholly formal, logical
or conceptual notions concerning the process involved in perception. Therefore
the examination is not solely restricted to former states of the perceiver but also
concerns with the present and future states. It has been said in the last karīka
of previous chapter that there is no one to hold seeing etc. together. according
to the view of the Sammattiya school something like soul is needed. About origin
of this notion, it has been noticed that the symbolism of the charioteer (Katha-
Upanisad, 3, 3-6) as well as the example of two birds, one enjoying the fruit, the
other watching (Mūḍaka - Upanisad 3.1.1.), adopted so enthusiastically by

\(^{75}\) Evam vidyādūpañāntam vyutasaṅgādīti karmāṇaḥ /
kartus’ca karmakartybhyām seṣan bhāvān vibhāvavēt //
Ibid. ka.-13.

\(^{76}\) The Pūrva-Pañḍā.

\(^{77}\) The Agrīndhana - Pañḍā.
the Brahmanical thinkers, were gradually making way into Buddhist philosophers thinking. The Sammittiyas were accused of permitting such a belief into the Buddhist fold. In this particular chapter i.e. the “Purva-Pariksa” or “Examination of the Prior Entity”, Nāgārjuna was thus convinced the concepts of the Ātman or Svabhāva were formulated by the metaphysicians who were attempting to know the past with certainty. It would not be impertinent in this connection to mention that the Brahmajāla-Suttanta of Dīgha Nikāya refers to a whole host of metaphysical views presented by those who were involved in such speculations called “Pubbānta - kappikā”. He examines and refutes the existence of an independent entity in the experimental process, whether it be prior to experience, simultaneous with it, or posterior to it and he is ready to abandon the thoughts (Kalpanā) of the existence and the non-existence (asti-nāsti) in the way they were understood by the metaphysicians. Candrakīrti, further, elaborates that an existing soul poised by imagination has no identity. The statement of the Mādhyamika aims at removing commitment to the identity of soul. This does not

78. First chapter is devoted to the study of these speculations. Specially pp. 9ff.
79. MMK, Ch.-IX, Ka. nos.-1,2,6,8.
81. Prāk ca yo darṣanādibhyah sāmpratam cordhvam eva ca/ na vidyate śti nāsti tī nivṛttastatra kalpanāḥ \//
MNMK, Ch.-IX, ka-12.
not mean that the Madhyamika imagines soul to be non-existent. We have to get rid of commitment to both existence and non-existence of soul.82

CHAPTER - X

Here with the help of the example of two common terms - the fire (Agni) and the fuel (Indhana), the view of those philosophers who believe in soul, holding together different modes of mental act, is being examined. About the relevance of this chapter viz. the 'Agnīndhana - Pañkaśa', observation of D.J. Kalupahana may be considered.83 Vasubandhu, in his Abhidharmakosā-bhāṣya, was recording a controversy among the Buddhists that had been continuing for centuries before him.84 When the Sautrāntika (master) Vasubandhu pressed his questions as to whether the person is real or nominal, the Vatsiputriyas fell back up on the metaphor of "fire and fuel" (Agnīndhana) in order to illustrate their point of view. This metaphor is then discussed at length and seems to have been the important means by which the Vātsiputriyas attempted to justify

82. yato bhāvārūpa atmeti parikalpitaḥ, sa svabhāvato na vidyate, tasya ca māyā svabhāvabhīνiveśanīvartakam eva vacanamukta masadviparyāsapratiipakṣena, na tu asya abhāvah parikalpitaḥ / dvayam hyetāt pari-tyāyyam yaśca bhāveyabhīνiveśaḥ, yaśca abhāvēṣu abhīνiveśa iti/ yathoktamī yadevena - yastāvatmā mamāntāṁ tenātmaniyamāṇa saḥ / nānvanityeṣu bhāvesu kalpanā nāma jāyate //
Catuḥśataka, 10, 3.

83. Ibid. pp. 195.

84. Stcherbatsky, Th. The soul theory of the Buddhists' a translation of the ninth chapter of the Abhidharmakośā (an appendix), deals with the controversial views of the Vātsiputriyas (considered to be the same as the Ārya - Sāṃmittiyas) who propounded the view that there is a "real person" or Sāntam pudgalaṁ.
their conception of person. Probably this controversy could not have escaped the attention of Nāgārjuna. Therefore, Nāgārjuna, after dealing with the question regarding a substantial agent (Kāraka, chapter - VIII) and also the motivation for such a theory (namely, the desire to trace one's identity to the past Purva, chapter - IX), would settle down to an examination of a singularly important metaphor used by the substantialists to justify their conception of an agent.\footnote{Kalupahana, D. J. Ibid. p. 196}

Kenneth, K. Inada points out that - "the terms, fire (agni) and wood (indhana), are critically analyzed into whether they are the same (ekattva) or different (anyatva). In other words, a pair of terms relating to the Mādhyamika Credo, i.e., anekārtham anānārtham, is under review".\footnote{Nāgārjuna, p. 80.} On the otherhand, based on the observation of Prof. Y. Ueda\footnote{Confer his Daijo-bukkyo-shiso-no-kompon-kozo; "The Fundamental Construct of Mahāyāna Buddhist Thought", Kyoto : Hyakkaen, 1957. Chapter 3, pp. 67-103. This chapter originally appeared as an article in the Tetsugaku - zasshi; "Journal of Philosophy [Japan]," March, 1951. From, Inada. Ibid. pp. 80-81. Inada also hinted the germ behind this logical thought. Ibid.}, he opines that "the unique logical principle in brief is that of any two concepts, e.g., fire and wood, there are inherent conditions in each such that their ultimate relationship into a whole or unity entails a mutual denial of each other".\footnote{Ibid.} The view of opponents is examined thus. If fuel is the same as fire, then likewise the agent and his action will be identical. If fire is
distinct from fuel, then it will exist without fuel.\textsuperscript{89} If fire which is distinct from fuel should unite with fuel, it would be like a woman uniting with a man and vice versa, a man uniting with a woman.\textsuperscript{90} The metaphor of the fire and fuel was utilized by the Vātsīputrīyas, not merely to understand the relationship between two empirical events, but also to justify the conception of a prior existent "person" (pudgala) being no different from the pre-existent "self" (Ātman) as assumed in the Upaniṣads, which is clearly expressed in the metaphor of "man and woman". Nāgārjuna was aware of the motivations of those who presented the metaphor. In the present kārikā he was therefore allowing the possibility of fire and fuel having a complementary relationship.\textsuperscript{91} It is to be noted that Candrakīrti assumes that the relationship exemplified by the metaphor "man and woman", is meaningless.\textsuperscript{92}

However, if any other implications are drawn form such a relationship, Nāgārjuna was ready to expose its untenability. It is an attempt to destroy the belief in a mysterious underlying unity, any substantial connection. Nāgārjuna is willing to allow for the empirical differences and the relationship of

\textsuperscript{89} Yad indhanam saced agnir ektvam kart\textsuperscript{\textregistered} - karma\textsuperscript{\textregistered}oh /
\quad any\textsuperscript{\textregistered}ed indhan\textsuperscript{\textregistered}adagnir indhan\textsuperscript{\textregistered}adapryte bhavet //
\quad MMK. Ch.-X, ka-1.
\textsuperscript{90} Anya evendhan\textsuperscript{\textregistered}adagnirindhanam pr\textsuperscript{\textregistered}pnuya\textsuperscript{\textregistered}d yadi /
\quad str\textsuperscript{\textregistered}sam\textsuperscript{\textregistered}pr\textsuperscript{\textregistered}pnoti purus\textsuperscript{\textregistered}a\textsuperscript{\textregistered} purus\textsuperscript{\textregistered}a\textsuperscript{\textregistered}ca str\textsuperscript{\textregistered}\textsuperscript{\textregistered}yam yath\textsuperscript{\textregistered}a//
\quad Ibid. ka.-6.
\textsuperscript{91} Kalupahana, D. J. Ibid. pp. 190ff.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
independence among such events. However, he is not prepared to leave any room for any speculation about underlying substance - Svabhāva. He firmly declares that by means of the analysis of fire and fuel, the total relationship between Ātman and Upādāna, along with the notions of earthen Jar, cloth, etc., have all been explained. Ātman and upādana refer to man and his five basic factors (Skandhas). Finally, he said that those who speak of the reality of entities and who assign them distinct existences cannot be considered truly knowledgeable of the teachings of the Buddha.

CHAPTER - XI

The next chapter that is the Purvaparakōti - Pāñjikā brings us on two new grounds, in connecting up with the Dukkha - Pāñjikā (Chapter - XII) and the Samskṣerapāñjikā (Chapter-XIII). Nagarjuna, mainly, discourses here on "things" in widest generalily. The chapter - XI, though brief, is a vital part of the work. Here again, as in the previous chapters, the arguments develops by breaking

93. Anya evendhādagnirindhanam kāmamāpnyayānt/
agṛindhane yadi syātām anyonyena tirāṣkṛte //
MMK, Ch.-X, ka.-7.

Cf. Ka-13, and chapter - II.

94. Agṛindhahanābhyaṁ vyākhyāta atmopādānayoh kramah /
sarvo niravāsesaṁ sārdham gnatapatādiḥ//
Ibid. ka.-15.

95. Ātmanāśca satattvam ye bhāvenām ca prthak prthak /
nirdīśanti na tānmanye sāsanāsyarthasya - kovidan //
Ibid. ka.-16
up the doctrine of Samsāra into separate elements, i.e., into the three temporal moments of prior, posterior and simultaneity, and by showing the ultimate obscurity and uncertainty of these elements.

Rebirth (Punabhava) is an important concept in the Buddhist doctrine, even though the Buddha was much concerned with the problems of the present life. For the Buddha, the knowledge of the past (aftāmānyāna) was an important means of understanding the present. Yet he did not encourage speculation regarding the past because that would eventually lead to all sorts of metaphysical views. For this reason, he remained silent. However, with the problems that emerged during the scholastic period in the matter of explaining any form of origin (utpāda), not merely of the first beginning (pūrvakoti), some Buddhists were compelled to deny outright any form of beginning. The difficulties involved in providing an explanation seems to have led the metaphysicians to assume the absence of a prior end rather than of its inconceivability. Nāgārjuna proceeds with the examination of the view current during his day. His first contention is the great sage has stated that the prior end is not known. The Life - process is without beginning and end. There is neither a beginning nor an

97. While Sarvāstivāda conception of substance left no room for origin and cessation, the Sautrāntikas had difficulties explaining the origin and cessation of momentary events. Dutta, N. The Spread of Buddhism And The Buddhist Schools, pp. 165ff; Radhakrishnan. S. Indian Philosophy, Vol. - II, pp. 621ff.
98. MMK, Ch.-XI, Ka.-1.
end. How could there be the middle of that which has neither a beginning nor end? Therefore, the methods of distinguishing the prior, the posterior or both together i.e. the middle are not appropriate. If birth were to come first and decay - death were to follow, then birth would be without decay and death, an immortal would thus emerge. If birth was to be posterior and decay-death anterior, then the latter would be without cause. How could there be decay-death of one who is not born? Effect and cause as well as characterised and characteristic together with feeling and feeler or whatever fruits there are not only is there not an anterior state in samsāra but this state is not possible for all existences.

CHAPTER - XII

In the chapter - XII, with suffering as the particular case, things in general are also shown to be indeterminate by the very fact that they are "non-originated". They can not be created from themselves, from anything else, both or neither. The problem is stated in the opening karika which asserts the four possible

99. Ibid. Ka.-2
100. 'ahetukam aśtam syāt jara - maraṇaḥ kathaṃ", Ibid. ka-4.
101. Kāryaṃ ca kāraṇaṃ caiva laksyaṃ laksanaṃ eva ca/
vedeṇā vedakaścaiva santyartha ye ca kecana //
Ibid. ka.-7
102. Svayaṃ kṛtam parakṛtām avāhyām kṛtahetukām /
dūḥkhambityeṣa incchanti tace ca kāriyam na yujyate //
MMK, Ch.-XII , ka-1.
ways of viewing the causes of suffering. Inada observes that in each instance the usual logic of reductio ad absurdum (Prasāṅga) is applied to exhibit the untenability of each causal view. Nāgārjuna concludes by making reference to the fact that the four fold possible views (cāturvidhyām) can equally be applied to demonstrate the impossibility of asserting elements of the external world.103 On this explanation of Inada, Kalupahana differs. The statement that "these are the four fold possible views" (cāturvidhyām) seems to leave no room for a forth view which both the Buddha (in his discourse to Kassapa) and Nāgārjuna (at XII.2) were very clearly and unequivocally upholding, namely, "dependent arising of suffering. Hence his conclusion that these four possible views can equally be applied to demonstrate the impossibility of asserting elements of the external world.104

The Buddhist metaphysicians who adopted a theory of momentariness had difficulty explaining personal continuity or identity in a more empirical way. They were confronted with the problem of explaining good and bad, suffering and happiness as part of the Sarvāstivādins would maintain the suffering, etc. are mere qualities (lakṣaṇa) that characterize the dravya, or they would, along with the Sautrāntikas, maintain that qualities are appropriated or become part of the stream. Such a perspective inevitably leads to a distinction between the person or the stream of personal identity, on the one hand, and qualities like

103. Inada, Ibid. p. 88.
suffering on the other. At the beginning Nagarjuna upholds this theory and brings out its metaphysical implications and afterwards he questions the very nature of that person who being independent of suffering, causes suffering on its own. If suffering were to be produced by one person and given over to another, that suffering is caused by the former. How can the latter be identified without suffering? If suffering is caused by another person, who is that other person, who, himself remained without suffering, causes it and bestows it on another. With the non-establishment of self-causation, how can there be suffering caused by another? If suffering could be caused individually by one's self and by another, then there should also be suffering caused jointly. Where is this non-causal suffering which is neither caused by itself nor by another? Thus Buddha's one of fundamental concepts was examined by Nagarjuna and finally it was declared by him, -

Na kevalam hi duḥkhasya Cāturvidhyāṁ na vidyate /

bhāyānāmapi bhāvānāṁ cāturvidhyāṁ na vidyate //

That is, 'Not only is the four-fold causal view of suffering impossible but the same is not possible with respect to the external elements of being'.
CHAPTER - XIII

The title of this chapter is "Saṃskāra-pankṣa". The term, 'Saṃskāra' is an old terminology employed from Early Buddhism and refers to the nascent mental force. Inada appreciates the Stcherbatskian interpretation of this very term as "Synergy" because "Saṃskāra in reference to the synthetic or synthesizing energy of life". However, the classical Hindu philosophers who misquoted the Buddhist texts, and some of the modern interpreters who were guided by such philosophers, have portrayed Buddhism as a pessimistic religion by misinterpreting the words of Lord, especially the doctrine of "Suffering". The three prominent characteristics, impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and non-substantiality or non-soul (anattā) have been recklessly lumped together by these interpreters and applied to all phenomena when the Buddha in numberable instances and in every statement, made in regard to these three characteristics, always distinguished between Saṃkhāra and Dhamma. These three characteristics are always mentioned as follows:

i) "All dispositions are impermanent" - "Sabbe Saṅkhāra anicca"

ii) "All dispositions are suffering" - "Sabbe saṅkhāra dukkha"

iii) All phenomena are non - substantial - "Sabbe dhammā anattā".

112. Inada, Ibid. p. 91
It is clear from the above discussion that there is clear distinction between Sañkhāra and Dhamma. Buddha specifically referred to the former (Sañkhāra) being subject to suffering. Therefore, it is not surprising that Nāgārjuna concentrates his attention on the Sañkhāra (Skt-Samskāra) after his examination of the problem of suffering. At the outset, Nāgārjuna strikes at the moot point of the subject by saying that the Bhagavān (Blessed One) condemned all conceptions arising from false discrimination of realities. This is attributed to the nature of samskāra or mental conformation.\textsuperscript{114} The discussion then goes into the conceptions of self-nature (Svabhāva) and varying nature (anyathābhāva), and their possible relationship.\textsuperscript{115} But, in any case, the argument does not readily accept their respective existences.\textsuperscript{116} There is no strict conversion from one to another. Thus the discussion gradually shift from the concept of Samskāra to the real meaning of Śūnyatā - the only true view of existence. But Nāgārjuna is very alert to caution that the Śūnyatā is not easy subject to conceptualization.\textsuperscript{117} The conception of ‘Śūnyatā’ or Nairātmya, utilized

\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{114} Tanmṛṣā mosadharmanam yadbhagavānityabhāṣata /
\textsuperscript{114} sarve ca mosadharmānhr samśkārāstena te mṛṣā //
\textsuperscript{114} MMK, Ch.-XIII, ka-1.
\item\textsuperscript{115} Cf. Ibid. Ka, nos.- 4, 5.
\item\textsuperscript{116} Yadyaśūnyam bhavetkcitsyācchūnyamiti kim cana /
\textsuperscript{116} na kim cidastyaśūnyam ca kutah śūnyam bhaviyati //
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid. ka-7.
\item\textsuperscript{117} Śūnyatā sarvadṛṣṭinām proktā niḥsaranām jinaih/
\textsuperscript{117} yesāṁ tu śūnyatādṛṣṭistānāśadhyān babhāsirē//
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid. ka-8.
\end{enumerate}
by Buddha in order to free oneself from all metaphysical views—drṣṭis. It can turn out to be an equally unsatisfactory if its application is to be carried beyond its proper limits.118

CHAPTER - XIV

The ‘Samsarga-Paṭikā’ resumes a theme from chapters - III and VI respectively. Even admitting that the twelve bases and the eighteen elements exist, they cannot possibly enter into combination. Thus it initiates to establish the Sarvāstivādin’s belief in an immutable svabhava is both illogical and unorthodox, “Kārikā-1”119 of this chapter has direct relationship to chapter - III which examines the six āyatanas (bases of sense perception) and the karika-2120 (bases of sense) to chapter-VI which deals with the passion (lust) and impassioned (lustful) self, This second kārikā not only referring to another set of categories examined previously, this application is then extended to all occurrences such as the defilements and faculties.121 Nāgārjuna’s argument is

118. Cf. Sarvam ca yujyate tasya śūnyatā yasya yujyate// sarvam na yujyate tasya śūnyam yasya na yujyate // MMK, Ch.-XXIV, ka-14
119. D. stavyam darśanam drṣṭa trīyetāni dvisodviṣab// sarvaśaśca na samsargam anyonyena vrajantu tā//
120. Evam rāgaśca rakṣaśca raṇjanīyam ca drṣyatām// traidhena śesaḥ klesāśca šesāny āyatanāni ca//
121. Na ca kevalamanyatvam draṣṭavyāder na vidyate// kasyacit kenacit sārdham nānyatvam upapadyate//
   Ibid. ka-4.
to show the absurdity of these ideas combining and evolving one from the other or from their identical or different natures. Thus, finally, he arrives at the conclusion that the presently combining (samsāryamāna), an already combined (samsṛṣṭa), and the agent which combines (samsṛṣṭi) are untenable\(^{122}\). Whole discussion, explicitly proves Nāgārjuna's consistency to his basic credo i.e. with respect to non-identity and non-difference technically called anekārtha and anānārtha, respectively.

\[\text{CHAPTER - XV}\]

Nāgārjuna here discusses the idea of self-nature or self-existence (Svabhāva) and the possible ways of conceiving it. He introduces concept of extended or other nature (Parabhāva) to show that it too cannot help in the understanding of the character of self-nature. In refuting the conception of substance, Nāgājuna relies upon the Buddha's own conception of a "middle

\[^{122}\text{Na tena tasya samsargo nānyenīnyaasya yuyiṣaye/}
\text{samsāryamānam samsṛṣṭam samsṛṣṭa ca na vidyate //}
\]

Ibid. ka-8.

cf. Darśanaśravaṇādibhuyavaṇādibhuyava ca/
yah prāgyavasthitoho bhāvaḥ kena praṇāipto thā satvah/

MMK, Ch.-IX, ka.-3.

also in the commentary, Yoasau pudgalo darśanaśravaṇādibhyapūrvamasthitivyavasthitapyate, sa kena praṇāipto? Pudgalapraṇāipterhi darśanaśravā kāranaṃ / sa yadi tebhāyaḥ prāgyavasthitosthitakalpyate, tadā darśanaṇirapekṣayaḥ syād gaṭahādvā pataḥ! Yaśca svakāraṇaṇirapekṣayaḥ sa nirhetuko dhanādininirapekṣyaḥ dhanikavānāstityabhīpṛayaḥ // MS, p. 91.
He clearly declares his stand referring to the discourse of Katyāyana that deals with the two extreme of existence (astitva) and non-existence (nāstitva)\(^{123}\). In the very outset, Nāgārjuna states his own pragmatic view of truth as something made (kṛtaka) dependent upon causes and conditions (hetu-pratyaya-sambhūtaḥ). Substance of self-nature, if it were to exist, could not escape the principle of dependent arising.\(^{124}\) Then he proceeds to examine the substance of self-nature or Svabhāva.\(^{125}\) The 'Svabhāva' - 'self-nature' or 'identity' has to be necessarily a permanent feature. Being a subject to origination and cessation, it cannot be an identity of a thing. Candrakīrti explains that identity or substance is a natural feature of an entity, which does not vary in all three times, that which not being earlier as well as is not created later; that which is not dependent upon causes (nirapekṣaḥ) and relativity and that which does not derive its characteristics being in relation to other entities, like long, short etc.\(^{126}\) According to Madhyamikas this kind of nature is called

\(^{123}\) Katyāyanavāvāde caśīti nāśīti cobbhayam /
pratisiddham bhagavata bhāvābhāvāvibhāvinā/

\(^{124}\) Na sambhavaḥ svabhāvasya yuktah pratyaha hetubhiḥ/
hetupratyayasambhūtaḥ svabhāvaḥ, kṛtako bhavet/
Ibid. ka.-1.

\(^{125}\) Svabhāvaḥ kṛtako nāma bhavisvati punaḥ katham/
Ibid. ka-2.

\(^{126}\) akrtrimah svabhāvo hi nirapekṣaḥ paratra ca/
Ibid. ka.-2.

yatascaitadevam, ato yadebhagena kālatrayeapyavābhīcīrī niṣjam rūpaṃ akrtrimam,
pūrvambhūtaḥ pascādanna bhavati, yacca hetu-
Dharmatā and Śūnyatā. Therefore, identitilessness is the real identity (Dharmatā) or suchness (Tathatā) of a thing or entity. It has been conceived as unborn.

Therefore, the identity of Tathatā is really identitilessness.\textsuperscript{127} In the Kārikā Nos. 6 and 10 Nāgārjuna strikes at the heart of the matter by reassuring all that truth expounded by Tathāgata cannot be grasped by a play or interplay of concepts, such as, self-nature, (Svabhāva), extended nature (Parabhāva), existence (Asti), or non-existence (Nāsti)\textsuperscript{128} and that the wise should abandon all ideas which tend to treat existence in terms to, static notions, such as permanent (sāsvata) or annihilation (uccheda)\textsuperscript{129}, notions which are antithetic to the Mādhyamika credo.

\textsuperscript{127} ya sa dharmanam dharmatā riṣima, saiva 
tutsvarūpaṃ / atha keyam dharmanām 
dharmatā / dharmānāṃ svabhāvah / koayān 
svabhāvah / prakṛtih / kā ceyam prakṛtih ? 
yeyam śūnyatā / keyam śūnyatā ? 
Naiḥsvabhāvayam ? tathatā / Keyam tathatā? tathā - 
ḥāvovikāritvam sadaiva sthāyita / sarvathānu - 
trapāda eva hyagnādiṇam paraninapeksyaśvādakṛtir 
-tvāsvabhāva ityucyate/ MS, p. 130.

\textsuperscript{128} Svabhāvam parabhāvam ca bhāvam cābhāvameva ca/ ye paśyanti na paśyanti te tattvaṃ buddhaḥśasane// 
MMK, Ch.-XV, ka-6.

\textsuperscript{129} Astī śāsvatagraho nāśītyucchedadasāvanām / 
tasmādasthitvānāśītyata vicaksanaḥ// 
Astī yadd hi svabhāvena natan nāśīl śāsvatāṃ / 
nāśīddhiṇām abhiḥ pūrvam ityucchedah prasajyate// 
Ibid. ka. nos. 10-11.
As was evident from an examination of the preceding twelve chapters, Nagarjuna's analysis of Dharmas was intended to eliminate the metaphysical conceptions relating to identity and difference (ekārtha - nānārtha). In that process, he refuted the metaphysical notions of origination and cessation (utpāda - nirodha), eternalism and annihilation (sāsvata - Uccheda) and appearance and disappearance (Āgama-Nirgama). These metaphysical notions were the result of assuming a permanent nature (Svabhāva) in phenomena, an assumption that mutually related by a conception of absolute otherness (Parabhāva). Identity or the self nature (Svabhāva) thus being the major issue and it is quite natural for Nagarjuna to conclude this particular problem with a thorough examination of that concept.130

CHAPTER - XVI

The human personality, both in bondage and in freedom is analysed here. Nagarjuna takes up the problem of the person who is liberated, question of truths, of freedom itself and also deals with the metaphysical interpretations of them.131 This is the first chapter to discuss Nirvāṇa (Mokṣa) and its implications. A fuller treatment, of course, is reserved for chapter - XXV on the Examination of Nirvāṇa but here the general trend of the treatment is hinted at.

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130. MS', pp. 235-237, (Candrakīrti explains the justification as well as views of other schools).
All living beings are bound by defilements, i.e. by being caught up in the cycle of existences or life-death process of samsara. Is their a way out of all this bondage?\textsuperscript{132} To think in terms of a release or deliverance (mokṣa) from the bondage (bandhana) is not enought. Nāgārjuna again brings in his logic of reductio-ad-absurdum to demonstrate that what is already bound cannot be unbound, that what is unbound need not be bound,\textsuperscript{133} and that there cannot be any movement from one thing to another in what we understand as samsara. Even conceptual knowledge works in a similar fashion for he says that those who believe in manipulating the concept of Nirvāṇa have the gravest of all attachments\textsuperscript{134} and that Nirvāṇa and Samsāra are beyond thought.\textsuperscript{135}

**CHAPTER - XVII**

This is one of the most interesting chapters since it deals with the popular Buddhist concept of man's action. Man, in general, is interested in the question

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\textsuperscript{132} MMK, Ch.-XVI, ka, nos. 2-3. This issue has already been discussed in the chapter - II, namely, Upaniṣadic Soul Theory And Buddhist Theory of Soullessness.

\textsuperscript{133} Baddho na mucyate tava baddho naiva mucyate / syātāṃ baddhe mucyamāne yugapadbandha - mokṣāne / MMK, Ch.-XVI, Ka-8.

\textsuperscript{134} Nirvāṣyaṁyanupādaṁ nirvāṇam me bhaviṣyatī / iti yeṣāṁ grahasteṣaṁ upādaṁnamahā - grahaḥ / Ibid. ka-9.

\textsuperscript{135} Na nirvāṇa - samāropo na samsārāpakarasaṇam / Yatra kas tatra samsāra nirvāṇam kim vikalpyate // Ibid. ka.-10.
of what past, present and future deeds are and to what extent they are significant to present lives or to what extent they are controllable. The first twenty karikas of this chapter state the views of non-Mādhyamika Buddhist thinkers concerning the nature of the result of action. Ten kinds of action are explained in the previous ten karikas in order to clarify the nature of ten deeds. These are as follows: three kinds of acts done by body, four acts done by speech and three acts done by mind.\textsuperscript{136} The ten paths of pure deed are the means of realizing the dharma.\textsuperscript{137}

The effects of the dharma of this as well as the next realm of life are the five sensual enjoyments. Candraketū\textsuperscript{138} criticized that the example of seed implies

\begin{verbatim}
136. Tatra yac cetancyuktaṁ karma mānasam smṛtam /
  cetayitvā ca yat tuktaṁ tat tu kāyika - vācikāṁ //
  MMK, Ch. - XVII, ka-3.
137. Dharmaṁ sādhanopāyāṁ sūktāṁ karma-pathāṁ dasyāṁ/
  phalāṁ kāmagnāṁ pañca dharmaṁasya pretya ceha ca//
  Ibid. ka-11.
138. Yadi vijñāna kusala dharmayena cistasamtaṁ śāsvato-
  cchedadarsanadvayo prasangaparipāraṁ, tadā
caukhaṁ sādhaṁ saṁkhyābahuṁ venā mahāṁtaḥ ca
dṛṣṭā dṛśtvā virodhaṁ parapakṣe prāptuṁ / Kathaṁ
crtaṁ ? ............... evamihāpi kusācippītā kusālacitta -
  saṁtāna eva syāti, saṁtāna jātiyātāt, na
  akusālavākṛtacittasamtaṁ, vijñayātāt /
  ............. / manusyaṁcitāṁ manusyaṁacittameva
  syāṇaṁ devaṁrakatiya gādyannya cittam /
tatra'ca yo dehaṁ sa deha eva syāti, yo
  manusyaṁ sa manusyaṁ eva syādinīyāti /
  Tatra'ca akusālamapi kurtataṁ devamanusyaṁ-
  nāṁ gatiyovarṇabuddhīdhvāryabālaṁ āpa
  bhogadivaityam na syādpaṇḍapataṁ ca/
  ... / Eva bahuvaṁ śāsvatāṁ ca doṣa yasamavātqa
  -samstānasadhammakalpāṇyāṁ prasaṇyaṁ,
  Tasmanaliṣā, kalpāna atropapādhyate//
  MS, p. 153.
\end{verbatim}
that like-effect is caused by only like-cause. Good act will generate only good act. Man is generated by man and so on, but this is not so, because men and gods are supposed to move in so many bodies according to good and bad acts. According to the explanation of Candrakīrti a good act is destroyed immediately after it is done but its result will persist, because along with the emergence of act a characteristic called non-destruction also arise in the agent like a loan-deed. This loan-deed like non-destruction is bound to give result of its action to the agent. But once the loan-deed encashed, it becomes infructuous so far as the subsequent attempt to encash is made. Therefore, the emergence of the result of an action is explained with the help of non-destruction of characteristics.

Employing the same type of logic (Prasāṅga) as seen in previous chapters, he destroys any notion the opponents may have that a movement of anything from one place of action (e.g. karman) to another (e.g. phala or effect) is possible. With equal force he condemns any idea of an indestructible continuing action (avipranasa) which gives the sense of continuity or transition in man’s everyday life deeds.139 In karika-20140 Nāgārjuna enunciates the true position of the Buddha who said that Śūnyatā is not disruption (uccheda) and that samsāra is not

139. Prahānato na prahēyo bhāvānāheya eva va / 
    tasmādavipraṇaśeṇa jāyate karmanāṃ phalaṃ //
    MMK, Ch.-XVII , ka-15.
140. Śūnyatā ca na cocchedah samsārasca na sāvataṃ / 
    karmano' vipraṇās as' ca dharma buddhena desitaḥ //
    Ibid.
permanency (sāsvata). Undoubtedly, all conventions would then be contradicted. The distinction between the performance of good and bad also will not be proper.\textsuperscript{141} If this action is associated with defilements, these defilements, in turn, are not found in themselves. If defilements are not in themselves, how could there be an action in itself?\textsuperscript{142} A sentient being, beclouded by ignorance, is also fettered by craving. As an experiencer, he is neither identical with nor different from the agent.\textsuperscript{143} If both action and agent are non-existent, where could there be the effect (phala) born of action? When there is no effect, there can there be an experiencer (bhokta)?\textsuperscript{144} In the same way, an agent is like a

\begin{verbatim}
141. Vyavahārā virudhyante sarva eva na saṁsayaḥ/
   pūrṇa-pāpa-kṛtor naiva pravibhāgaś ca yuyjate //
   Ibid. ka-24.
142. Karma klesatmākam cedam te ca klesā na tattvataḥ/
   na cet te tattvataḥ klesāḥ karma syāt tattvataḥ katham //
   Ibid. ka-26.
143. Avidyā-nivrto jantus trṣṇaṁ ca samyayanas'ca saḥ /
   sa bhokta sa ca na karturanyo na ca sa eva saḥ//
   Ibid. ka-28.
144. karma cen-naasti kartā ca kutah syāt karmajam phalam/
   asatyathaphale bhokta kutaeva bhavisyati //
   Ibid.ka-30.
\end{verbatim}
created form and his action is like his creation. It is like the form by another who
is also created. Finally, he declares defilements, actions and bodies, agents
as well as effect, all these are similar to the cities of gandharvas, are comparable
to mirages and dreams. This same metaphors used at the end of chapter-VII
to illustrate the nature of metaphysical theories pertaining to origination, duration
and cessation, are employed here to elucidate the character of similarly
conceived theories relating to defilements, actions, personalities, agents and
consequences.

CHAPTER - XVIII

This chapter relating to Atman is not well arranged, but it does, in a
very condensed manner, give a better idea of the essence of the author's own
philosophy than any other chapter in Mūlamadhyamaka - Kārika. The belief in
'I' and 'Mine' (pañca - upādānskandha) is due to discursive thought (vikalpa),
which, again, is due to ignorance. This vikalpa produces the defilements (klesā),
which again activate karma, which in turn leads to rebirth. Emptiness is the
only weapon that destroys the expanded world (prapañca) forming the basis of

145. Tathā nirmitakārāḥ kartā yah karma tat kṛtaḥ,/
tad yathā nirmitānāyo nirmito nirmitas tathā/
   Ibid. ka-32.
146. Kilesāḥ karmāṇi dehāḥ ca kartāras' ca p halānī ca/
gandharva - nagarakāra mañci - svapna - samāhārāḥ //
   Ibid. ka-33.
147. It has already been dealt, minutely, in the chapte-II relating to the Upanisadic soul
   theory .... So just a gist of it is presented here to keep up continuation.
Vikalpa. The absolute truth, liberation, is beyond prapañca, therefore nothing can be said about it. So the Tathāgatas can preach one doctrine at one time, or its exact opposite at another time, depending on the needs and presuppositions of their audience and it is depth of insight that distinguishes them from one another.

CHAPTER - XIX

The Kāla - Pañkṣā leads rather abruptly back to a typical Sarvāstivāda problem - the three periods of the factor. Those who believe that time is absolute are criticised by Nagarjuna by saying that absolute time will not have the division of present, future etc. Mr. Kalupahana has presented Nagarjuna's arguments in the following manner:

1. **Major premises:**

   The present and the future are not seen to be established non-contingent upon the past.

2. **Middle term:**

   Contingence of the present and the future on the past implies the substantial existence of the present and the future in the past, which is not evident.
3. **Conclusion:**

Therefore, the present and the future, as substantial entities, do not exist.

Ignoring the middle term, so clearly defined at XIX.1-2, Nagarjuna's conclusion will appear to be an absolute rejection of time. It would then read as follows:

1. **First premiss:**

The present and the future are not contingent upon the past.

2. **Second premiss:**

The present and the future are not non-contingent upon the past.

3. **Minor premiss:**

The present and the future cannot be both contingent and non-contingent upon the past.¹⁴⁸

4. **Conclusion:**

The present and future do not exist.

Kalupanana prepared the above chart based on introductory three Kārikas. But the following kārikas are similarly fashioned. Nāgārjuna, himself, says - following the same method, the remaining two periods of time as well as related

¹⁴⁸.Ibid. pp. 276-277.
concepts such as the superior, inferior, middle and also identity, etc. should be characterised.\textsuperscript{149} Nāgārjuna, here insists that the same argument be applied to the concept of the present in relation to the past and future and future in relation to the past and present. In all these cases, the metaphysical issues emerge as a result of the absolute distinctions that are being made. Such as absolute distinctions are being often made in logical analyses, and are not supported by empirical evidence.\textsuperscript{150} Candrakīrti more explicitly refers that the first 'etc'. includes all the things dependent upon tripartite relations, like good-bad-indifferent - origination - existence - cessation, anterior - posterior - middle etc. The second 'etc.' includes two, many etc. These are to be explained on the line of the explanation of three times.\textsuperscript{151} Finally, Nāgājuna examines it conceived as moment, second, minutes etc. as follows:

\begin{verbatim}
149. Etenāivāvasistau dvau kramena parivartakau
    Uttamādhamamadhyādīhekavādīms. lakṣayet/
    MMK, Ch.-XIX, Ka-4.

150. The Sarvāstivādins and the Sautrāntikas were led to an atomic notion of time and temporality. Radhakrishnan very minutely observed it. I.P.Vol., p. 69
    D. J. Kalupahana has given an explanation of the experienced time based on the analysis of a modern psychologist. Ibid, introduction, pp. 35-36.

151. Uttamādhamamadhyāmān iti ādīśabdena kusātuṣṭatyākṛtaṇi, upādasthitibhaṅgangā purvātapparāntamad kamarūpurupiyaṭhātavaḥ, saikṣasaiksānaivaśaiks-
    sānaiva - saikṣadayo yāvantah padarthātripārthasambandhavasthitāh, te sarve grhyante / Ekavādīmeca ityāṇena ādīśabdena dvītvahūtvavorgrahāṉaṁ
teh eva uttamādaṁyaḥ ekatvādāyaśca kālārayāvākyāḥnyaṁna vākhyāṁā vediyaṁ//
    MS, p. 185.
\end{verbatim}
literally non-static time is not observed. A static time is not observed. A static time is not evident even if the unobserved time were to be observed, how can it be made known? It is specious, because, when any attempt is made to grasp it independent of temporal events, it vanishes like mirage. It cannot be known by any means.

CHAPTER - XX

The content of the Sāmaṅgaṇī - Pārśaṇa treats the concept of harmony (literally assemblage). It would seem that Nagarjuna’s treatment places greater emphasis on the idea of assemblage where various relational conditions (pratyaya), a use (hetu) and effect (phala) come together or exist in concomitance, he naturally utilizes the other concepts in order to show the impossibility of attaching any subsisting nature to any one of them, i.e, hinting at all times that existence or being per se is beyong descriptive manipulation153. The ideas expressed here

152. MMK. Ch. - XIX, ka-5.
153. All the possible combinations of cause-effect and their temporal moments are presented in these following verses :-

Nāṭitasya hyāṭitena phalasya saha hetunā/
naḥṭitena na jāṭitena saṃgaṭirjātā viḍyate//

Najāṭitasya hyajāṭitena phalasya saha hetunā/
naḥṭitena na jāṭitena saṃgaṭirjātā viḍyate//

Najāṭitasya hi jāṭitena phalasya saha hetunā/
naḥṭitena na naṣṭena saṃgaṭirjātā viḍyate //

MMK, Ch.-xx, ka. nos. 12-14.
are closely related to those found in chapters related to the Pratayya - Paññikṣā (chapter-I) and the Samsarga - Paññikṣā (Chapter-XIV). Nāgājuna’s criticism is mainly directed at the idea of self-causation. It is said that Sāmagrī Paññikṣā mainly treats the Sāṃkhyā view. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophy - 1) things though cannot be perceived because of their minuteness etc. In such a case existence of unperceived thing is proved by means of inference. The Mādhyamika holds that both existence and non-existence of the result cannot be proved by means of inference. Therefore, the result cannot be included under totality.\textsuperscript{154} 2) The result exists in unmanifested form and the same is brought out into the present as a result of the causes and relativity. Nāgājuna replies if the effect were to precede the harmony, then causation would be rendered meaningless.\textsuperscript{155} 3) The cause itself transforms into the result as well as ‘Cause’ and ‘effect’ are only words which in view of Sāṃkhya would have no real

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{154} Hetosca pratayānām ca sāmagryā jāyate yadi phalamasti ca sāmagryāṃ sāmagryā jāyatēkathām // Hetosca pratayānām ca sāmagryā jāyate yadi phalamnāsti ca sāmagryāṃ sāmagryā jāyatēkathām // MMK, Ch.-XX, Ka.Nos.1-2.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{155} Pūrvam eva ca sāmagryāḥ phalam prādurbhavet yadi / hetu - pratayya - nirmuktam phalam āhetu-kām bhavet - //
\textsuperscript{Ibid. ka-8.}
\end{flushright}

Interpretation of Sāṃkhya theory of cause and effect found in the Smākhya Karika is very aptly explained by Radhakrishnan in his Indian philosophy. Vol.-I, pp. 248ff (specially, pp. 277-283).
meaning.\textsuperscript{156} Against this view of the transition of cause into effect. Nāgārjuna says the transition of cause into effect means no new effect is produced;\textsuperscript{157} rather the eternal cause is transformed into result. When in reality the result is existing in the form of cause, then the talk of the production of the result is futile.\textsuperscript{157} After a continuous examination Nāgārjuna has reached this conclusion that the ceased cause (Niruddha) and stayed cause (tisthan) yet is distinct from the effect (phalenāvrtah) could never give rise to an effect.

CHAPTER - XXI

By the similar analysis, Nāgārjuna explains that dissolution (vibhāva) and emergence (sambhāva) take place in time and by showing the impossibility of both these their relation to time is also rejected. He goes through the usual process of discussing the two concepts in relationship to each other with reference to the three temporal movement. He introduces the subtle difference between the terms - bhāva and bhava.\textsuperscript{158} Bhava refers to general state or nature.

\textsuperscript{156} Niruddhe cet phalam hetau hetoh samkramanaṃ bhavet /
pūrva-jātasya hetos'ca punar - janma prasajyate //
Ibid. ka-9.

\textsuperscript{157} Janayet phalam utpannaṃ nirūddho' sthamgataḥ katham! tisthan api katham hetuḥ phalena janayed vṛtah //
Ibid. ka-10.
of existence and any entity or organism. In this sense, it connotes something of the nature of an enduring or static quality. This conception is what most of us profess to understand as the basis for the existence of all things. It is here that Nāgarjuna goes on to show that there is another realm or aspect of being which people have always overlooked. This is the realm or aspect of bhāva. Bhāva refers to the truly dynamic worldly existence that is it refers to the Buddhist fundamental conception of the continuity of becomingness of ordinary life. This becomingness or bhāva is a fact which no amount of conceptualization will ever be able to analyse. D. J. Kelupahana opines that "the terms sambhava and vibhava need to be translated keeping in mind the purpose of this section. It is an attempt on the part of Nāgarjuna to explain the life-process (Samsāra) or the human personality without restoring to theory of self or soul (atman, pudgala) considered to be eternal. As mentioned earlier, this whole section is devoted to the establishing of the ideas of non-substantiality of the human person (pudgala - nairātmya). This has to be achieved not only by showing the untenability of the theory of permanence or eternalism, but also of a conception of annihilation"\(^{159}\). In fact the fundamental concept of this chapter is based on

\(^{158}\) Bhāva (Masc. ṽbhū + nic-ac) contains the meaning learned, outward manifestation of mental states, sentiment, existence, a kind of acting. Of course, Nāgarjuna uses it in the sense of outward manifestation of mental states or existence.

OR

Bhava (Masc. ṽbhū+ap) contains an epithet of Śiva, birth, world, a kind of fruit. But Nāgarjuna uses both of those terms slightly different way.

Mukhopadhyaya, G. A New TRI - Lingual Dictionary, P. 282 (Bhāva), p. 281 (Bhava)
the interpretation of those two terms which in greater sense represent the life-process as well as the samsāra, from the Mādhyaṃika point of view.

Nāgārjuna examines four very important Buddhist concepts in chapters XXII-XIV. Chapters XXII-XXV are coherent in the sense that they have no regard for the "holiest of the holies" of any Buddhists, the concept of Tathāgata (XXII), the four misconceptions that is, the ignorance in which Buddha found the cause for the sufferings of existence (XXIII); the four noble truths, and even the highest goal for Buddhism, Nirvāṇa (XXV); all so that Nāgārjuna could ram home his basic idea of the emptiness of things. These four chapters effectively conclude the author's rejection of all conceivable dogmas (drṣṭi).

CHAPTER - XXII

Nāgārjuna begins by examining the Buddha-figure. Buddha is neither identical with nor different from the aggregates, and so unreal. If the Tathagata existed only on the aggregates, and so unreal. If the Buddha existed only on the basis of the aggregates quite independently of them, that would be absurd.

Both cases would imply an existence prior to appropriating. Therefore the Buddha

159. Ibid. p. 292.

160. There are two sets of skandhas, viz, five constituents (rūpa, vedanā, saṁskāra, saṁsāra and viññāna) and the five special acquisition of Tathāgata, (śīla, samādhi, prajña, vimukti, vimuktiśāntadāna). Nāgārjuna takes up the question of the identification of the first set of Skandhas with Tathāgata and shows how it is untenable. Early Monastic Buddhism, p. 299. Here a description of Tathāgata from canonical Pali texts and various points of view of the different Buddhist school have been presented. Ibid. pp. 295ff.
can not be established on the basis of grasping. Consequently there can be no appropriating associated with anyone at all. Both concepts are equally empty. All forms of expression can therefore only be suggestions, indications, nominal designations i.e. prajñāpāti. This is the only way to avoid the many misconceptions about the Buddha, the world and Nirvāṇa. The Buddha is in fact empty and incomprehensible as the world around is.

Nalinaksha Dutt observed the arguments of Nāgārjuna in the following way:

Tathāgata (a) is the same as the constituents (skandhas) or, (b) is different from the skandhas, or (c) & (d) is in the skandhas or vice versa, or (e) is possessed of the skandhas (skandhavan). He contends that none of the five propositions is true, and so the existence or reality of the Tathāgata cannot be established. He also points out that "the Śūnyatāvādins do not admit the earthly existence of Buddhas, who according to them, are created forms or apparitions".

161. Skandhān cāpya anupāḍāya nāsti kaścid tathāgataḥ/ yaśca nāsty anupāḍāya sa upāddāya kathāṁ /
   MMK, Ch.-XXII, ka-6.
162. Śūnyatā iti na vaktavyaḥ aśūnyam iti va bhavet /
   ubhayaṁ nābhayaṁ eeti prajñepatī artham tu kathyate //
   Ibid. ka.-11.
163. Prapañcayanti ye buddham prapañcātitaṁ avyayaṁ/ 
   te prapañcāhāṭaṁ sarve na paśyanti tathāgataṁ/ 
   Tathāgato yat svabhāvas tat svabhāvam idam jagat / 
   tathāgato niḥsvabhāvo, niḥsvabhāvam idam jagat //
   Ibid. ka. nos. 15-16
164. Ibid. pp. 299-301.
of the real and eternal Tathāgatas, identified with the ever-existing Truths.\textsuperscript{165}

\section*{CHAPTER - XXIII}

In this chapter Nāgārjuna reminds his opponents, since the defilements arise dependently, they are nothing in their own right.\textsuperscript{166} On the line of the five-fold rejection of the identification of Tathāgata with the aggregates (Ch.-XXII, ka-1) the view concerning form etc. to be the basis of afflictions should also be rejected. A thing is said to be the locus of attachment etc. According to Candrakīrti there are six kinds of things as the locus of form etc.\textsuperscript{167} Form is the basis on which a thing is identified as existing here or there.\textsuperscript{168} Likewise, sound, smell, taste, touch, mental object etc. are connected with their specific object.\textsuperscript{169} Thus these six kinds of things are the locus of afflictions. When a thing is imagined to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{165} Ibid. p. 302.
\item \textsuperscript{166} \textit{Subhāsubha viparyāsān sambhavanti prāfyante ye/}
\textit{te svabhāvān na vidyante tasmañ klesa na tattvataḥ/}
\textit{MMK, Ch. - XXIII, ka -2.}
\item \textsuperscript{167} \textit{Rūpasabdarasasparśa gandhā dharmāsca sadavidham/}
\textit{vastu rāgasya dvesasya mohasya ca vikalpyate //}
\textit{Ibid. ka-7.}
\item \textsuperscript{168} \textit{Candrakīrti, very aptly exemplified this karika. Tatra vastu ālambanam, vasatītī va asmini rāgādikam taduṭpatteh iti kṛtvā/ Tacca tadālambanam sūdā bhavati /}
\textit{MS, P. 223.}
\item \textsuperscript{169} \textit{Tenā sadadena sadadante prakāsyante padārtha iti sabdaḥ / gandhyante hiṃsyante yatra prāptah tatoanyatragamanād gandhāḥ / ṛasyate āsvādyate iti rasāḥ /
\textit{sprāyate iti sparsāḥ // - Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
be eternal soul etc. would create delusion.\textsuperscript{170} Thus attachment, aversion and delusion being imposed on things by mind are imagined.\textsuperscript{171}

There are four kinds of perversions\textsuperscript{172} -

a) To consider momentary aggregates as eternal;

b) Non-eternal is suffering but to consider suffering aggregates to be pleasant;

c) The body is always in all respects sinful. To consider this to be good;

d) Five aggregates have the characteristics of non-endurance, origination, cessation and devoid of permanence.

This, being contrary to the character of soul, to consider the aggregates as soul these four kinds of perversions create delusion.

Finally, the eternal being the opposite of the non-eternal, how could it be a perversion, when there is no non-eternal? Thus all the perversions are rejected. Even the grasping of emptiness can

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{170} Ibid, p. 224.
\item \textsuperscript{171} \textit{Rūpa - śabda - rasa - sparśa gandha dharmāsca kevalaḥ / gandharvanagarākāra mañci - svapno - saṁnibhaḥ //} \textit{Ibid. ka-8.}
\item \textsuperscript{172} \textit{Anitye nityam ityevam yadi graho viparyayah / nānityaṁ vidyate sūnye kuto graho viparyayah//} \textit{Ibid. ka.-13.}
\end{itemize}

also Kalupahana, Ibid. pp. 312ff.
constitute a sort of perversion (śūnyatā drṣṭi)\textsuperscript{173} This does not mean that the very conception of emptiness is invalidated in the same way as the concepts of permanence and momentariness would be invalidated. The reason for this is that the notions of permanence and substance as well as of momentariness are not empirically grounded compared with dependent arising (Pratītyasamutpāda), non-substantiality (Nairatmya) or emptiness (Śūnyatā). D. J. Kalupahana points out that both the Buddha and Nāgārjuna would categorise the former under wrong thoughts (praṇapāksa), while they would consider the latter as right or appropriate thoughts (sammyakaśānkalpa, kalpanā yatra yojyate, xviii. 13)\textsuperscript{174}

\textbf{CHAPTER - XXIV}

In exhibiting the true import of this chapter, i.e., the 'Āryasatya - Pāññā' or the 'Examination of the Noble Truth', he is highly critical of the opponent's adherence to the notion of a self acceptable sustaining, self-abiding entity. Since Śūnyatā is not amenable to any abiding or enduring treatment it therefore is the basis of all beings. Thus the Aryan truths of suffering, its extinction, the

\textsuperscript{173} Cf. Śūnyatā sarvadṛṣṭāṁ prakṛti niḥsaraṇam jīvāṁ / yeṣāṁ tu śūnyatādṛṣṭaṁ sadhāryāṁ babhāsire\
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid. Ch.-XIII, ka-8.
way, and final nirvana become intelligible only by and in Śūnyatā. Indeed Śūnyatā is pivotal concept of this chapter.

This chapter begins by first listening to the opponent’s, view that if everything is Śunya or Śūnyatā then all that is of the mundane world will be destroyed.¹⁷⁵ Nāgārjuna does not waste his time to remind them that he does not know the real import of Śūnyatā or its meaning. The various Buddhas have, after all taught us about the dharma by way of twofold truths, viz., saṃvṛtī-satya (relative or worldly truth) and paramārtha - satya (absolute or supreme truth)¹⁷⁶

The subtle distinction between the two truths must be clearly understood¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁵. The opponent contends are found in the introductory six karikas as follows : - i) Caturmāryasatyanāmabhāvaste prasajyate (ka-1) i.e. Aryan Four fold truths are non existance. Due to non existence of these, Prajñā (True knowledge), Prahānam (Relinquishing false views), Bhāvanā (Meditation or Right Practice) and Sākṣākarma (Right confirmation) will not be possible (ka-2) As these are non-existent, the Aryan four-fold fruits, i.e., spiritual attainments are also non-existent, there will be no one who enjoys the fruits or their fruition (ka-3). From the non existence of the Aryan Truths, there true Dharma also does not exist as well as if the eight aspirations of men do not, there will be no Samgha. (ka-4). If there is no Dharma and Samgha, how could there be Buddha. (Dharma cāsti samgha ca katham buddho bhaviṣyatil, ka-5). Finally, Nāgārjuna will destroy the reality of the fruit or attainment, the proper and improper acts, and all the everyday practices relative to the empirical world.

Sūnyatāṃ phalasadbhāvamadharmam dharmameva ca / sarvasamvṛtīvāhāramśca laukikān pratibadhase //

Ka -6.

¹⁷⁶. Dve satye samuṣṭārya buddhānāṃ dharmadeśanā / lokasamvṛtisatyāṃ ca satyāṃ ca paramārthataḥ /

Ibid. ka-8.

¹⁷⁷. Because who do not understand the distinction between the two truths cannot understand the profound nature of the Buddha’s teaching.

Ye'ṇayorna vijānanti / vibhājaṃ satyaḥ ca vijayoh- /

Te tattvam na vijānanti gambhirāṃ buddhasane //

Ibid. ka-9.
Because, the absolute truth cannot be arrived at without experiencing the mundane, relative truths in our day to day. Śūnyatā is the basis of all dharmas and of all truth. Nāgārjuna equates Śūnyatā with Pratityasamutpāda. It is also the Madhyamā pratipad and only a provisional name for the expression of truth itself. Nāgārjuna also insists on this very point that Śūnyatā is not to be equated with asūnya for in asūnya the same view held by the opponents i.e., that everything in the mundane world will be non-existent or destroyed, will then become valid. On the contrary, one who rightly discerns relational origination, its cessation and the way to enlightenment.

Thus, in this chapter Nāgārjuna exemplifies the Aryan fourfold truth inherent in the fundamental principles of Buddhism. The traditional exposition of these four truths is clearly stated in the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta known as Pathamadhammadesana or the first religious discourse delivered by the Buddha.

In the Petakopadesa, it is asserted that all that was uttered by the Buddha from

178. Vyāvahāramanāsāritya paramārtho na desyate / paramārthamaṇṇāgamyam nirvāṇam nādhigamyate //
Ibid. ka-10.

179. Yah pratityasamutpādab śūnyātām tām pracakṣaṁhāre / sa pra jñāptirūpādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā //
Ibid. ka-9.

180. Asamprāptasya ca prāptirduḥkhaṁaparyatākarma ca / sarvakleśāprahānam ca yadyaśūnyām na vidyate//
Ibid. ka-39.

181. yah pratityasamutpadam pasaṭidam sa pasaṭī// duḥkhham samudayam caiva nirodham margameva ca//
Ibid. ka-40.

the day of his Enlightenment to that of his great disease, fall within the scope of the Four Noble Truths. The role of this chapter is to show how important it was for the author to be considered a good Buddhist.

CHAPTER - XXV

This is, indeed, the most famous and popular as well as discussed chapter in this treatise due to the voluminous work of Theodor Stcherbatsky, one of the pioneer scholars in this field. "Even the renowned Stcherbatsky felt that an English translation of this chapter from Prasannapada was duly necessary. Incidentally, his translation of both chapters I & XXV out of the entire 27 chapters reveals how well he knew these chapters to be the crux of the Mādhyamika philosophy and, perhaps, suggests the reason why he labelled his pioneering book, The conception of Buddhists Nirvāṇa. Nāgarjuna, first of all, presents the opponent's view on the problem of nirvana, i.e., if everything is granted as either Śūnya or Āśūnya. At any rate, Nāgarjuna is quick to assert that Nirvāṇa is not the idea of existence known by worldly characterization. It belongs to

183. "Na kācī Buddhānāṃ bhagavantānāṃ dhammadesanīyā dhammacakkato bahiddhā; tassa sabbam suṭṭam ariyadhāmmesu pariyesitabbaṃ". Petakopadesa, ch-I, (Law, B.C. Concepts of Buddhism, p. 27).
185. Yadi śūnyamidam sārvamudayo nāsti na vyayat/
prahanādvā nirodhādvā kasya nirvāṇamisyate //
MMK, Ch.-XXV, ka-1.
186. Yadyaśūnyamidam sarvamudayo nāstina vyayah/
prahanādvā norodhādvā kasya nirvāṇamisyate //
Ibid. ka-2.
the uncreated realm. Then, the patent questions on Buddha's existence, before and after Nirvāṇa are discussed. There are four possible views regarding what happens after Nirodha. viz.

1. Tathāgata exists;
2. Tathāgata does not exist;
3. Tathāgata both exists and does not exist;
4) He neither exists nor does not exist.

Then, in equal spirit, universe is also examined. The view of end etc. are four:

1. the universe has an end;
2. the universe has no end;
3. the universe is with and without end;
4. the universe is neither with nor without end.

These are related to the Nirvāṇa being the last point. The following four views relate to Nirvāṇa being the first point, viz.,

1. the universe is eternal,

187. Param nirodabhagavān bhavaśīyeva nohyate / na bhavatyubhayam ceti nobhyam ceti nohyate/
188. Param nirodhatadantādyah saśvataśvāsca drṣṭayah/ nirvāṇamaparāntatam ca pūrvāntam saṃsaṁhitat //
Ibid. ka-21.
2. the universe is non-eternal;

3. the universe is both eternal and non-eternal;

4. the universe is neither nor non-eternal.

There is no distinction between Nirvāṇa and Sāṃsāra, and also no difference in their spheres of action. With this identity Nāgārjuna destroys any adherence to contrasting distinctions, such as, natural and supernatural, mundane and supermundane as well as normal and supernormal. Any factor of experience with regards to anyone at any place was never taught by Buddha because all acquisitions as well as play of concepts i.e., the symbolic representation are basically in the nature of cessation and quiescence.

The these twenty five chapters are devoted to a refutation of the metaphysical views. Having cleared up the dust that had gathered around all the doctrines preached by the Buddha, Nāgārjuna is now ready to go on to the

189. Na sāṃsārasya nirvāṇat kim cidasti vīśeṣaṇam / na nirvāṇasya sāṃsāratkim cidasti vīśeṣaṇam //
   Nirvāṇasya ca ya kotih sāṃsārasya ca/ na tayorantaram kim cilusūkṣmamapi vidyate//
   Ibid. ka. nos. 19-20.

190. Sūnyeṣu sarvadharmeṣu kimanantam kimantavat / kimantamanantavaccacā nānantam nānatavacca kim//
   kim tadena kimanyatkim sāsvatam kimāsāsvatam / aśāsvatam sāsvatam ca kim va nobhayamapyatah //
   Ibid. ka. nos. 22-23.

191. Sarvopalambhopasāmah prapañcāpasāmah śivah/ na kacitkasyacitkaściddharmo buddhena deśitah//
   Ibid. ka-24.
positive description of practice of wisdom by experiencing the truth - Tattva.

With the discussion of Nirvāṇa in the immediately preceding chapter the treatment from the standpoint of the Mahāyāna had basically come to close. In this chapter and the final one to follow, Nāgārjuna goes into the analysis of Hinayānistic doctrine - the Dvādasāṅga - Pañcikṣā and the Dṛṣṭi - Pañcikṣā.

CHAPTER - XXVI

Dvādasāṅga denotes twelve fold causal factors i.e. causal genesis or Pratītyasamutpāda. It may be stated as one of the most subtle teachings of Buddha. According to the tradition192, Buddha, towards the close of the week after his first enlightenment at the foot of the 'Bodhi-vṛksa' conceived within his mind three successive forms of Pratītyasamutpāda.193 It is elaborated by the formula of twelve nidānas - primary sources or causes. Each of the twelve nidānas is regarded as a distinct causal term, and they all are set forth as links in a chain of dependent origination. Nāgārjuna uses in his discussion that very term 'Dvādasāṅga'.194 Inada observes - "the discussion of the doctrine of causal


193. (1) The Anuloma ('hair-wise', 'usual') form in the first watch of the night (i.e. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.) Ibid; p.1 (2) the Patīloma ('contrary-wise') form in the second watch (i.e. 10 p.m. to 2 p.m.). Ibid. p. 2; (3) the Anuloma - Patīloma (Co-ordinated) form in the third (i.e. 2 a.m. to 6 a.m.). Ibid. p. 3.

194. The Nidānas (or Aṅgas) which are held at the root of all suffering are twelve in number. They are : 1) ignorance (Avidyā); 2) impression (Samskāra), 3) consciousness (vijñā); 4) mind and matter (Nāmarūpa); 5) six organs of sense (Sadāyatana), 6) contact (sparśa); 7) feeling (vedanā); 8) desire (tanha);
analysis indicates the strong influence of Hinayānistic or Abhidharmic teachings during this period. But the doctrine must be seen under a new light when Nāgārjuna discusses it, i.e., with in the backdrop of his doctrine of Śūnyatā and pratītya-samutpāda, as hinted at in the last two verses.\textsuperscript{195}

According to Nāgārjuna's explanation there are three kinds of Samskāra (impressions): good, bad and indifferent. Those who are deluded by ignorance create their own three fold conformation (relate to body, speech and mind) in order to cause rebirth and by their deeds go through the various forms of life.\textsuperscript{196} The Vijnāna (consciousness) generated by impression\textsuperscript{197} inspires the self. When Vijnāna is established, Nāma and Rūpa are infused to become apparent. The Mind technically called Nāma, is that which forces consciousness to move to different forms or Rūpas. According to another interpretation a Nāma is that which by virtue of being a sign leads to an object. A Rūpa (form or matter) is that which is comprehended or which is contradicted. In his commentary on this very kārikā Candrakīrti refutes the idea of momentary entity indetails. His basic argument is that an entity which exists just for one moment cannot contain

\begin{itemize}
  \item 9) attachment (upādāna);
  \item 10) existence (bhava);
  \item 11) birth (jāti);
  \item 12) old age and death (jara - maraṇam).
\end{itemize}
195. Ibid. p. 160.
196. Punarbhāvāya samaskāre na vidyāni vyrtastridhā / abhisamkūrute yāmstairgatiṁ gacchati karmabhiḥ // MMK, Ch.-XXV, Ka-1.
origination and destruction together. When the Nāmarūpa are infused the sadayatana arise. With the rise of these six organs of sense, sparśa (touch) evolves. The harmonious triadic nature of form consciousness and eye issues forth touch. And from sparśa (touch) arises vedanā (feeling). Relationally conditioned by feeling, trsna (desire or craving) arises because it "thirsts" after the object of feeling. In the process of craving, upādāna (clinging or attachment) are seized. When there is clinging perception, the perceiver generates being.

198. samniviste'tha vijñāne nāmarūpaṃ niśicyate}//
Ibid.


199. Niṣikte nāmarūpe tu sadāyatana - sambhavah / sadāyatanamāgamyam samśparṣa sampravartate //
Ibid. ka-3.

200. Samnipātastraṛyaṇāṁ yo rūpaviṇānacaksuśaṃ
Ibid. ka-5.

201. tasmātsparsaccacca vedanā sampravartate/
Ibid.

202. Vedānāpratyaya trṣṇā vedarāthāṃ hi trṣyate /
trṣyamāna upādānāmupādatte caturvidhāṃ //
Ibid. ka-6.


203. Upādāne sati bhava upadātuvā pravartate/
Ibid. ka-7.
Being is (always in reference to) the five skandhas and from being birth (Bhava) arises. Old age-death, suffering, etc., misery, grief, despair and mental disturbance arise from birth (Bhava). In this manner the simple suffering or Duḥkha attached to the Skandhas comes into being. Consequently, the ignorant creates mental conformations which form the basis of existence in cyclic order (Samsāra). Thus the ignorant is the doer while the wise, seeing the truth (Tattva) does not create. Ignorance can be banished depending upon the practicing of wisdom i.e., the cessation of the twelve fold causal genesis of being. By the cessation of the various links of the causal genesis, each and every subsequent link will not arise. And thus this simple suffering attached to the skandhas (entity) is rightly extinguished.

204. Pañcaskandhāḥ sa ca bhavāḥ bhavājījāti pravartate /
     jarāmaranaduhkhādi śokāḥ sarāridevanāḥ //
     Daurmanasyaupāyāśā jāteretatpravartate/ 
     kevalasyaivametasya duḥkhashandhasya saṃbhavaḥ//
     Ibid. ka. nos. 8-9.

205. Samsāramūlaṃ samskārānavidvān samskarotyayaḥ/
     avidvān kārakastasmānna vidvānastattvadarśanāt //
     Avidyāyā niruddhāyāṃ samskāraṇāṃ - asambhavāḥ/
     avidyāyā nirodhastau jñānasyaiva bhāvanāt//
     Tasya tasya nirodhenā tattanābhipravartate/
     duḥkhashandhāḥ kevalo' yamevam samya-gniruddhyate//
     Ibid. ka. nos. 10-12.
CHAPTER - XXVII

As the title indicates, it is an examination of the false or dogmatic views Drsti-Parıksa which the Hiññayana labelled against non-Buddhists206 but once again we must not lose sight of the principal doctrine of Śūnyatā that Nāgārjuna always has in the background. Here chapter begins by investigating such pet-dogmatic and futile questions, sixteen in all, grow out of two assumptions, that something (the self or the world) is either limited (impermanent) or infinite (permanent). There are eight views207 relating to a previous existence, as follows.

1) I was in the past;

2) I was not in the past;

3) I was and I was not in the past;

4) Neither I was nor I was not in the past.

Likewise,

5) The world is eternal;

6) The world is not eternal;

7) The world is both eternal and non-eternal;

206. In the Brahmajālasutta, we have noticed that Buddha also refuted such false views numbering sixty-two (Dvasthīya-Ditthiyo) regarding the soul and the universe. Already discussed in the Upaniṣadic Soul Theory ..... (Ch.-II). note-8.

207. Drstayo' buvam nābhuvaṁ kim nā tvā te' dhvanītica/
yāstāḥ sāśvatalokādyāḥ purvavatam samupadātāḥ/

MMK, Ch-XXVII, ka-1.
8) The world is neither eternal nor non eternal.

Existence, hereafter, means existence which is to come after the present one. These are also eight types.208

1) I shall be in future;
2) I shall not be in future;
3) I shall and I shall not be in future?
4) Neither I shall be, nor I shall not be in future.

Likewise,

5) This world is limited;
6) This world is not limited;
7) This world is or is not limited;
8) Neither this world is or nor is not limited.

According to Nāgarjuna if the world were eternal every thing would remain in its own fixed place. All actual change in connection with rebirth in different world (god to man for example) would be excluded209. If the world were on the other hand limited, and in one way or another could come to a stop, that would also lead to absurdities.210

208. Drṣṭayo na bhaviṣyāmi kimanyo' nāgate' dhvani/
     bhaviṣyāmiti cāntādyā aprāntaṁ samāśrītoḥ/
     ibid. ka-2.

209. Ibid. ka. nos. 15–20.

210. Antavān yadi lokah syāt paralokah kathāṁ bhavet/
     athāpya nāmantavāṁ lokah paralokah kathāṁ bhavet/
     ibid. ka-2.
Nāgārjuna also goes on to show the absurdity involved in trying to assign partial characterization to one realm and another partial characterization to yet another realm as, for example, speaking of partially limited and partially unlimited worlds he asks, could one portion of the perceiver be destroyed and another remain undestroyed?

Thus, we come to the final and foremost teaching of the historical Buddha, i.e., the true law (Saddharma) which is beyond all views and valuation in the strictest sense. Indeed, as Nāgārjuna reminds us, all existences are of the nature of Śūnyatā - devoid of self-nature or characterization.

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211. Ibid. nos. 18-21.
212. Katham tāvadupādātārekaṃ vinaññāye//
   Ibid. ka-26.
213. Sarvadrsti prahānāya yaḥ saddharmadesayat/
    anukampāmupādāya tam namaṣyāmi gautamaṃ//
   Ibid. ka-30.